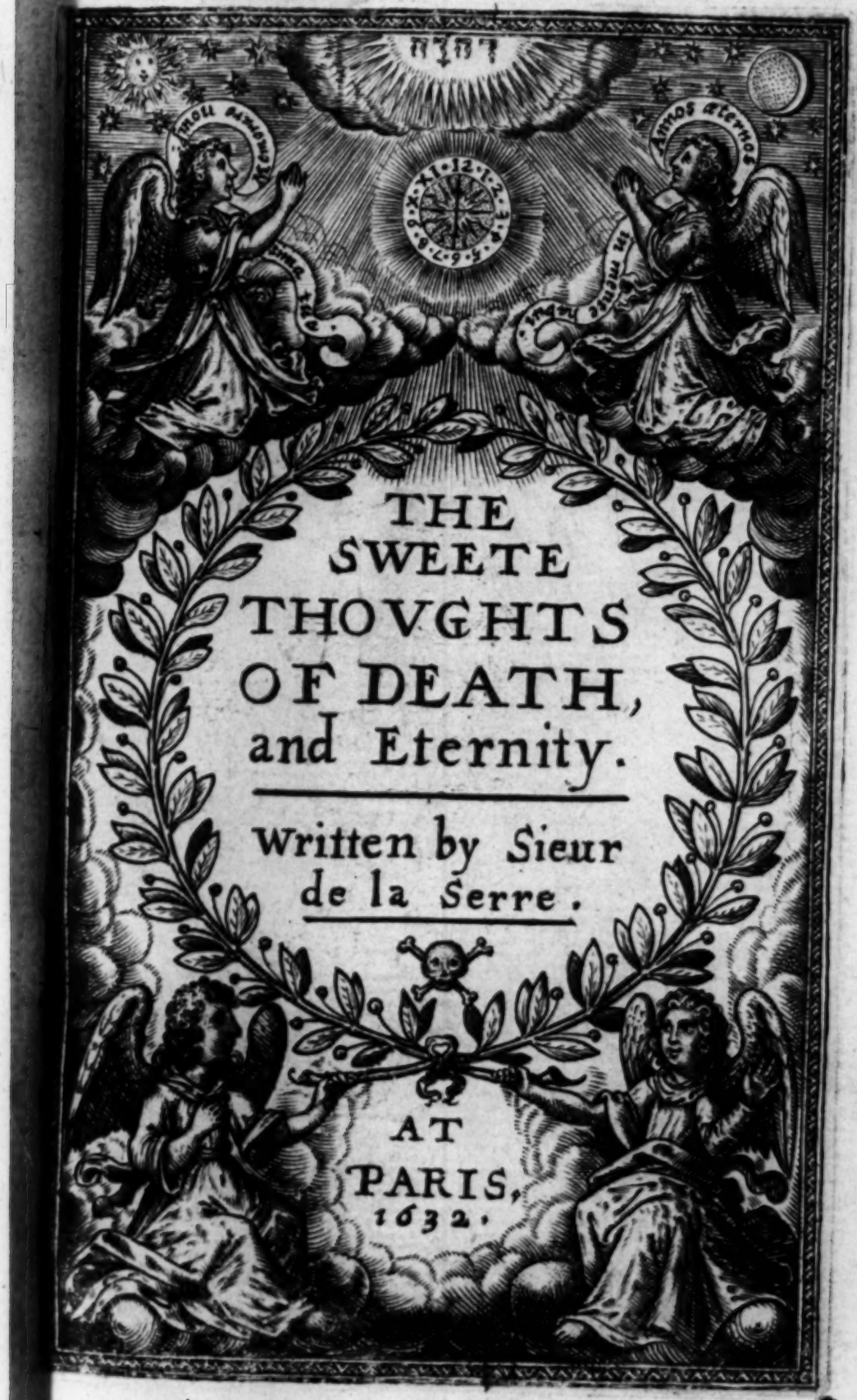


THE SWEETE THOVGHTS OF DEATH, and Eternity.

Written by Sieur de la Serre.

AT PARIS, 1632.

Mary Winbour

TO

THE RIGHT

HONOVRABLE

HENRY NEVILL,

BARON OF

ABERGAVENY.

SYR,

YOV may behold heer a senſles Statue, made to the Life, but vvithout Life, till the Promethean Fire *of your*

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vvell knovvn piercing Iudg-
ment gracing it, giue it a true
ſubſiſtence. It hath a Mouth
vvithout VVords, VVords
vvithout Spirit, till you the
Mecænas, *through your* Ho-
nours *gracious acceptation, af-*
foard it ſtrength & energy. As
for the Heart, expreſſed in the
pure Intentiõ of this Addreſſe
to your Honour, *it is vvholy*
yours; nor needs the ſpoiles of
feigned Deityes, to giue it
breath, to make it more your
ovvne, then novv it is. Or ra-
ther if you pleaſe, you haue heer
tvvo nevv-borne Tvvins, put
forth

forth thus naked as you ſee into the vvide VVorld, to ſhift for themſelues; and like to be forlorne, vnles your Lordship, *pittying their pouerty, take thē into your Honourable Patronage, and ſafe Protection.*

France *hath had the happineſſe to giue them their firſt birth; your* Honour *ſhall haue the trouble to afford them a ſecōd: That to haue bred a Spirit able to conceiue and bring forth ſuch iſſues; And your* Lordship *through your noble Fauour, to make them free Denizens of this Kingdome. Or laſtly, to*

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ſpeake more properly, I heer preſent your Lordship *vvith the* Svveet Thoughts of Death, and Eternity, *expreſſed in our tongue. Not to vndertake, to make that ſvveet vnto you, (vvhich other vviſe vvere bitter) vvho through a fayr preparation of a Chriſtian and vertuous life, haue confidence inough to looke grim* Death, *in the face; and vvith good ſerenity of conſcience, to vvayt on* Eternity: *but rather that your* Lordship, *vvould pleaſe to commend the ſame to others of like quality, vvho follovving*

the

the vogue of the allurements, pleaſures, and delights of this vvorld, may haue need of ſuch noble Reflections, as Monſieur de la Serre, *Authour of this VVorke, vvell verſed vvith people of that ranke, hath learnedly, and piouſly shevved to this more free and diſſolute age. So shall your* Honour, *do a charitable vvork of mercy, the vvorld be edified, and I vvell ſatisfied, to haue put to my hand.*

Your Honours moſt humbly and truly deuoted.

H. H.

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Of

Of the sweet Thoughtes of Death.

CHAP. I.

THERE are no sweeter Thoughtes, then those of *Death*. Spirits being rayſed to the knowledge of Diuine thinges, do euer occupy themselues in counting the tyme of their banishment in this strange Land, where we sigh vnder the burden of our Euils. Slaues liue not, but of the hope to see themselues at liberty; their prisons and their irons are obiects, both of horrour and dread, which put their soules vpon the racke. The Sun shines not for them at all, and all the sundry pleasures agreable to their senses changing their nature, serue but to afflict them. So as in their captiuity, they breath

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the ayre of a dying lyte, whoſe moments laſt for ages. We are thoſe ſlaues ſo enchained within the priſon of our bodies, as exiled from the paradiſe of our delights, where the firſt innocency of our parents, had eſtabliſhed vs a Manſion: ſo true it is, their diſobedience hath changed our bodies into priſons, and the delightes of our Soules into thraldome. What feelings then, may we haue in this ſeruile condition, whereunto we are brought, but thoſe of an extreme dolour, and bitter ſorrow, to ſee our ſelues depriued of the Soueraygne God, where Soules do find the accompliſhment of their reſt? The harts being holily enamoured, ſpeake ſo ſweet a language both of ſighes & ſobbs, in the abſence of that they loue, as if the Angels were touched with enuy, they would deſire to learne it, to make therof a new Canticle of glory in their Eternity.

Of all the dolours that may tyrannize a ſoule, ſuch as know what it is to loue, find not a more intollerable, then that of the abſence of the Subiect with they loue perfectly indeed. And if it be true, that affections draw their force from their merit, what ſhould our loue be towards this Sauiour, whoſe perfection ſo wholy adorable, cannot brooke compariſon but with theſel-

ties. And how be it this great God be infinitly louely, yet would he needs be borrowing a hart of nature, to resent the draughts of our loue, & to dye on the Crosse of their woundings. What excesse of goodnes? How may they resist the sweet strokes of his mercy? He espouses our Condition, for to suffer all the miseryes therof; (sinne and ignorance only remayning without power agaynst his person) in so much as dying, he changed the countenance of death, and makes it so beautifull, as generous harts at this tyme, sigh not, but in expectation of their last sigh, since euen the selfsame moments that lead vs to the Tombe, conduct vs also to immortality.

The paynes which my Sauiour hath suffered on Mount Caluary, haue beene fruitfull to bring forth diuers punishments, in fauour of the infinite number of Martyrs, who loued not life, but to resent it's death. His Nayles haue forged them others of that sort. His Thornes haue thence produced new Thornes; and the forme of his Crosse hath made them to inuent some others of the lyke; and the turning vpside downe of his, hath serued *S. Peter* for a Couch to dye in. For ioy rather, then of payne, I would say, that all the deadly instruments of the passion

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of my Redeemer haue beene the preparatiues of the Triumph, that a million of ſoules haue carryed away in their Martyrdom. The Scourges haue been for *S. Bartholomew*, the Nayles for *S. Andrew*, the Sword for *S. Paul*, the wounds for *S. Francis*, and the Croſſe ſerues on earth, for a new ſubiect of Enuy, for the whole world togeather, ſince that euery one can pretend no better then to this glory to ſacrifice his life, vpon the ſame Aultar, where the Authour of life hath beene immolated.

O how the amourous plaintes of that great Apoſtle make all to reſound with a ſweet melody! Me thinkes the ſweet accẽts of his cryes do eue rauiſh my Spirit through mine eares. The tyme of my lyfe is too long (ſayd he in the ſtrength of his Paſſion) I am troubled to reckon vp the moments of it's durance. When ſhall it be, that I ſhall liue forth of my ſelfe, to go to liue in him, whom I loue much better then my ſelfe? Quite contrary to thoſe guilty Soules, who ſtand diſcoutſing of death as of a loſſe, where he deſires it for recompence: So as the Sun had neuer a fayre day for him, and Nature ſo beautifull in its diuerſities, and ſo fruitfull to bring forth ſo many wonders, was barren for his contentment; in ſo much as the

obiects of his pleasures was quite without the world: and yet through a Miracle worthy of him, he liued, and dyed of Loue at once. O sweet Life! But yet more happy death! The Swan after she hath measured diuers tymes, the humide spaces of the banckes, euen tyred out with lyuing, calles for death vnto her succour, with accents of melody, so sweet and so pittifull withall, as that it cannot choose but then, euen yield to the assaults of Compassion. This bird being richly dressed vp with innocency, proclaymes the truth of her Death to Forrests, to Champaygnes, and to Rockes by the sad accents of her tunefull notes, whose harmony doth rauish all those, that haue sense of feeling in them, and giues them a desire to dy with her. This Diuine Apostle, dying on the shore of his teares, represents to vs this bird. For being now weary to liue so long tyme absented from his lyfe, he sends vp his amourous sighs to Heauenwards, & with a voyce full of allurements, cryes out, how he desires to abandon his body, for to go, to behould the God of his Soule. The harmony of his cryes, so powerfully attracts the harts vnto him, as all those who are able to heare but the Eccho of it, and to perceyue i'ts sweetnesse, doe

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borrow wings of al ſides to fly out of themſelues, while the Earth is in contempt with them. You Soules of the world, I inuite you heere to hearken to this Conſort of Muſike, where the Angells hold their part; but you muſt purify your ſenſes, if you wilbe rauiſhed with Pleaſure, and Ioy.

What Pleaſure it is to thinke of Death.

CHAP. II.

A TRAVAILLER ſtrayed from his way, and puzled in the full of the night, within a thicke forreſt, finds himſelfe on a ſudden brought into ſtreights, through a thouſand aſſaults of feare, wherwith his Soule is ſtrooken. He caſts his eyes on euery ſide, but ſees nothing but ſhadowes of horrour which preſage the ſun-ſet of his life. The noyſe of the impetuous winds that puts a garboyle into the boughes, beate ſo roughly on his eares, as he breathes but in a deadly feare, more intollerable wellnigh then death. His imagination being troubled, lets him ſee in dreame, in the midſt of the darknes, as many precipices, as the ſteppes he makes on his way. In ſo much as he belie-

ues

ues euery momẽt he is buryed quick in some pit or other, with the whole burden of his euils. The feare of being deuoured by the sauage beasts, makes him to apprehend a new punishment, whose dolour redoubles euermore, through the sensible apparence of some euident danger. The heauens & earth being hid alike from his eyes within obscurity, for remedy represent to him despaire, & in effect, his Iudgement being now stupid with terror, hath not the liberty of discourse but to conclude vpon his losse, al things the while cõtributing to his most disaduantage. Himselfe sees not himselfe awhit, as if already he were quite besides himselfe; & the little sense he hath left him, serues him but to suffer euils, which in their excesse do rob him of his speach.

Thus brought to this extremity, where death is more present with him then life, since he wholy dyes and liues but to halfes; he lifts now at last his eyes to Heauenwards, where he discryes a ray of light to disclose through the birth of the *Aurora*, which serues him as a Beakon or Watchtower to remit him into the path of his way which he had lost. The day by little & little makes the shadowes of death, with enuirone him, to vanish out of sight, & with the

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hope of lyuing, affoards him the contentmẽt to behold the precipices which he hath eſcaped: in ſo much as he arriues to the places of his deſires with a great deale more pleaſure then he felt paine.

Let vs now ſay, We are theſe Trauaylours, wandering in the thicke Forreſt of this world, during the darknes of Synne, which enwraps vs one euery ſide. The winds of temptations bluſter without ceaſe in our eares; euery ſtepp we ſeeme to make forwards, leads vs into the Tombe, ſince we dye euery houre; and the abyſſes are alwayes open to ſwallow vs vp, as culpable of a thouſand ſortes of crimes. Being brought to this eſtate, the Heauen hides it ſelfe from our eyes, as not able to pretend a whit for it's glory: So as being oppreſſed with diuers diſaſters, we breath the ayre of a lyfe, full of annoyes, and of vnſufferable afflictions.

The light of Eternity, which ſhines to vs in the port of the Sepulcher, is this goodly *Aurora*, whoſe day diſperſes the ſhadowes of our night for euer. What contentment to arriue at this port amidſt ſo many ſtormes? What happineſſe to enioy the brightnes of a Sun, which is not ſubiect to Eclypſes, after ſo many tedious nights? We are all Pilgrimes,

grimes, who continually trauayle, from this world into the other. The darknes of ſinne is the thadow of our bodies, ſince they accompany vs without ceaſe. What incomparable felicity, to go forth of out ſelues, to find out that day which ſhould illumine vs eternally? What may we deſire in Slauery, but Liberty? In darknes, but light? and in Trauayle, but Reſt? This earth is a priſon, let vs neuer thinke then, but to recouer our liberty. This vnlucky dwelling is a place of obcurity, let vs gape after the light. This fatall Manſion, is fertile onely but with thornes and troubles, let vs get forth of it's bounds, to fynd the true tranquillity: and according as we ſhall approach to the good of death, ſo ſhall we diſtance our ſelues frō the euils of lyfe.

O ſweet death where our miſeries termine themſelues! O cruell life, where our diſaſters take their begining! O welcome death where our annoyes do find their ſepulcher! O dread life where our dolours find their cradle! The moſt afflicted draw al their cōſolation from the hope of death. Are we not of this number, as ſubiect to all the diſgraces of Lot, and to the cruell lawes of Fortune? With what ſweeter hope may we mitigate our paynes, then with that of a ſpeedy brea-

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king the chaynes of our captiuity ? If we dyed not euery houre, there would be no contentment to liue. For what likelyhood is there that a trauailour ſhould take any pleaſure to ſtop in the midſt of his way, during the tyme of a ſtorme ? Now the world is neuer without tempeſts : What remedy were it to make a ſtop at a flaſh of lightening, or a cracke of Thunder, in the midſt of the way of our life?

Being preſſed with a ſtorme, and encompaſſed with Rockes, ſhall we not be ſēding our deſires before hand to the port, with this griefe, for not hauing wings to fly more ſwiftly thither? So as if the ſhip of our life, cannot land but at the ſhore of the ſepulcher, is it not at this port whither we are to aſpire euery moment, to put vs in the Lee from Shipwrackes, whereof ſo many wiſe Pilots haue runne hazard ? I haue no feare but of old age, ſaid *Zenon*, For of all euils, that of life is the moſt intollerable. In effect, if we thinke on the diuers torments, that pull away our life, by little and little from vs, we ſhould be of *Socrates* his opinion, who of all the momēts of our life, prizeth none but the laſt. O happy moment, & irkeſome to thoſe that go before! *I am troubled* (ſaid *Dauid*) in *the houſe of men: when ſhall I arriue into that of*

my

my Lord? He was alwaies going thither, but the way ſeemed ſo long and tedious to him, as he ſighed continually after the end of his iourney.

All things tend to their Center; the Stones being rayſed from the earth, do borrow wings to their weighty nature, to deſcend downe beneath, where they alwayes haue their looke. The Riuers, though inſenſible are touched with this amourous curioſity to reuiſite continually their Mother. And the Piramidall flames of fire do witnes they burne, but with deſire of ioyning thẽſelues with their firſt beginning. And howbeit their endeauours are vnprofitable, yet haue they neuer other ſcope. The Heauen is our Center; with what more violent paſſions may we be quickned then with that of being rauiſht from our ſelues, to ioyne as Atomes to their vnity, & as rayes to the body of their light? Thoſe Torches of the night whoſe number is infinite, and beauty incõparable, not ſo gallãtly ſhew vs their twinckling baytes, but to enthrall vs with their wonders. They ſhine not to vs, but to ſhew vs the way of their Azure vaults, as being the only place of our repoſe. And it ſeemes the galloping courſe of the Sunne, goes not ſo tufning the great globe of the Heauens, but

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but to ſhew the way from aloft vnto the Inhabitants of the Earth.

If ſome one had the gift of propheey, & that it were foretold vs, in a certaine tyme ſet downe, that we were to poſſeſſe an ample fortune, be it of goods or greatneſſe, all tranſitory a like; were it not credible, the day of this attendance would be to vs of a long put-off? How many ſighes, as witneſſes of our languours, ſhould we be ſending forth, before this felicity ſo promiſed? The greateſt dolour we could poſſibly ſuffer, would be but of impatience; for through force of paſſionately deſiring this good, all ſorts of euils would be inſenſible to vs. The Sunne that poſts ſo ſwift would then go ſluggiſhly, and its diligence could not ſtay vs a whit, from aceuſing it of ſlouth, as often as we gazed vpon Heauen.

Let vs now conſider, the myſtery of this Propoſition, and ſay, that our Sauiour and the King of Prophets hath giuen vs this aſſurance from his mouth, that the laſt inſtant of our lyfe ſhalbe the firſt of our immortality; and ſo on the day of our death, ſhould we poſſeſſe an infinite number of felicityes, be they in immortall goods, be they in the greatneſſes of nature it ſelfe. From what ſweet diſquietneſſes, might we

ſeeme

ſeeme to be exempt in the expectation of this happines? The holy Soules who breath in this world the ayre of grace, liue not, but of the ioy they haue of continually dying. With how many ſighes of loue, and languour, ſmite they Heauen at all houres? All the fayre dayes the Sun affoards them to their eyes, ſeeme to be ſo ſad & lowring, as hardly do they marke the differẽce betweẽ the light and darknes, becauſe they loue but the eternall dayes, which are to ſhine to the birth of their felicity. And this is the day of death, where ceaſing to be men, we begin to be as Angels.

S. Frauncis wounded on all ſides with a thouſand darts of loue, ſighes in the preſence of his Mayſter, for griefe that he cannot dye of his wounds. He contemplates the wounds of his Redeemer, and his lookes haue this Diuine vertue with them, as to make his ſoule to reſſent the ſmart. And through the force of his ſweet torments, the amorous paſſion wherewith he is taken makes him to reſſent the dolours of his Mayſter, in ſo much as the markes thereof themſelues are imprinted in his ſtigmatized Body Then it is, that ſoownning with ioy, extaſied with pleaſure, and rauiſhed with a thouſand ſorts of felicityes wholy Diuine, he ſequeſters

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ſters himſelfe from the earth, to approach vnto Heauen. He feeles himſelfe to dye of loue, without being able notwithſtanding to looſe his lyfe: for though his wounds be mortall, ſince all termine at the hart, yet their cauſe is immortall. So as dying in his lyfe, and liuing in his death, he dyes, he lyues, wirhout dying, and without lyuing. Of dying, what apparence, ſince he is ſunke in the ſpring of lyfe? Of lyuing who would belieue it? Let vs then ſay, that if he dye, it is of a Death a thouſand tymes more ſweet then lyfe; and if he liue, it is of a lyfe of extaſy, which feeles nothing of the humane.

This ſweet Saint, ſeeing himſelfe vnder the wound of the bloud of his Maiſter, belieued verily he ſhould make ſhipwracke, through force of deſiring the ſame, in ſo goodly a ſea, whoſe tempeſts were ſo much the more gratefull to him, as loue ſerued it ſelfe of his ſighes, to driue away the ſtorme. And in truth, how could he looſe himſelfe in the preſence of his Sauiour, whoſe Croſſe ſerues him, as well for a watch-tower, as for a Hauen in the midſt of the torments, which his wounds haue cauſed to grow in him? He would feygne haue found ſome rocke, within this ſea of loue; but the Pi-

lot

lot who ſteeres the ſhip of his life, is a Port of aſſurance for all the world; ſince he cõmands the winds and tempeſts.

What pleaſure needs muſt this great Saint take, to ſee himſelfe thus ſmitten with the ſelfe ſame woũds of his Maiſter? The Croſſe fayles him; howſoeuer yet he hath it in the hart. The Crowne of Thornes he miſſeth; but what ſay I? he weares it in his Soule. But then at leaſt, he ſeemes not to be depriued, but of Nayles and Gaule? I deceiue my ſelfe. For as for the nayles he caryes the markes thereof, as well in hands, feet, as ſide; and for gaule, the tongue takes very greedily the ſweet bitternes therof. O great Saint thrice happy! Tel vs the pleaſure which is to dye, ſince you dy ſo ſweetly in the extaſies of your felicities? How irkſome needs muſt life be to you, and the earth be in contempt with you, in this trãſportation of ioy, wherunto you are rayſed?

S. Stephen hath beheld the Heauens opened; and you his hart; who hath created them. *S. Paul* hath ſeene ſo admirable things as might not be tould; and you felt ſuch delicious as cannot be expreſſed. *S. Peter* hath beene dazeled through a beame of glory; & you by one of loue, whoſe light hauing pierced

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pierced your darkſome body, hath made it tranſparent to the eyes of all the world: ſo communicating it's diuine qualityes thereinto, as the markes therof remayne eternal. *S. Iohn* hath ſlept vpon the boſome of his Maiſter; and by a ſweet tranſport your hart got through, and ſought, within the boſome of his hart, your moſt aſſured repoſe. This ſame diſciple hath beene a witneſſe of his torments; and you participant of his paynes, with this glory yet moreouer, of bearing as well the wounds in the Soule as the markes on the body. So as your fauours are ſo deare, as none dare enuy them for fear of preſumption, though otherwiſe they be moſt worthy of enuy.

I wonder the thoughts of Death ſhould be diſpleaſing, ſince we dye with pleaſure in the life we lead. There are none ſo blind in the knowledge of themſelues, that know not how they dy euery houre; were it not iuſt then, that we ſhould thinke vpon that which we are continually a doing? And wherefore ſhall we not take pleaſure at this thought, if it be the moſt profitable & ſweet that we are able to conceiue? It is impoſſible to thinke of death, but we muſt needs be thinking of Eternall life which ſucceds the ſame: or rather ſay we, It is impoſſible

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to thinke of the Soueraigne God, and not to thinke of the imaginary euill of death. And where ſhall we be finding of thoughts both ſweeter and deerer, then thoſe of our Soueraigne Good? So as if, for the rayſing of our ſpirits thither, we are to paſſe into the imaginations and idea's of death; the light of the Sunne which ſhal ſerue vs for obiect, ſhall diſperſe all thoſe vayne ſhaddowes, which ſubſiſt not but through a falſe opiniõ.

The ſtarre of the day, neuer ſhewes more bewtifull thẽ when it hath eſcaped, through flight, from a ſhole of clouds which do hide its light. Thoſe obſcure clouds, ſo ſtrongly relieue the flaſh of its light, as thence it appeares to be radiant in exceſſe. The like may we ſay of our Reaſon, being as the Sunne of our life, that from the tyme it eſcapes from all theſe vayne ſhadowes of feare and dread, which do veyle its brightnes; it appeares ſo ſhining, as it ſerues for a torch to paſſe very confidently withall, from this life to the other. The Will loues but the Good; it is the Needle that is alwayes a pointing at this Pole. It is the Iron, which inceſſantly followes this Adamant, as its only obiect: In ſuch ſort, as we are not capable of loue, but to purchaſe the good which is preſented vnto vs, be it falſe, imaginary, or true. And

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therin is iudgement giuen vs to know the difference, that is from the one, and the others.

Now, that life is a falſe good, there may no doubt be made, ſince it hath no other foundation in it, then misfortunes & myſeries. That it is an imaginary good, we are enforced to belieue, whiles its pleaſures are but of fancyes and dreames. But that death is a true good, we are to hould for certaine, ſince it is the end of the terme of our exile, of our captiuity, of our ſufferances. For we cannot enter into glory but by the gate of the tombe, where being reduced to our nothing, we returne to our firſt beginning. Sweet then are the thoughtes, which make the life faſtidious and death pleaſing; & yet more ſweet the deſires, that termine all our hopes in Heauen. Such as know not the Art of dying well & diliciouſly, are vnworthy to liue. Impatience in the expectation of death, is more ſenſible to a holy Soule, then the greateſt pleaſures to a man of the world. We cannot loue life, but in cheriſhing the fatall accidents, that are inſeparable from it, which made *Terence* to ſay, *That he loued not any thing, of all that which was in him, but the hope of a ſpeedy dying.*

In effect, there is no greater conſolarion

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in life, then that of death. For were it immortall, with all the encombrances that cleaue vnto it, of all the conditours that are found in nature, that same of man would prooue to be the most vnfortunate. The afflicted loue not, but by the sweet expectation of death, and the others of the hope of a second life, with reason imagining with themselues, that if on earth they be touched with some pleasure, they shalbe one day accomplished in Heauen with all desirable delights. And through the good of our death it is, that we possesse the soueraigne good of eternall life. It is the entry of our felicity, & the passage from the false and imaginary, to the true and alwayes permanent. He is yet vnborne, whose hart being glutted with all sorts of contentments, hath neuer gaped after new pleasures.

There is not a Soule in the world, how happy soeuer it thinke it selfe, that points not its pretensions beyond that same which it possesseth. We hold it good to be rich, our desires are alwayes in chase of Good. We are raysed to the top of the greatest dignities; we build new Thrones in our imagination, not finding on earth scope inough to satisfy our Ambition withall. In so much as mã hath alwaies vnrest in the repose, which

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he hath once propoſed to himſelfe ; which makes vs ſenſibly to perceiue, that the obiect of out deſires, is forth of nature ; and that if we ſigh in the midſt of our felicityes, it can be but of the hope we haue to poſſeſſe ſome greater then they . We haue lyued long inough then, in *Tantalus* his Hel, where we are continually a thirſt, without being euer able to drinke. We muſt be vſing of ſome violence with our ſelues, and go couragiouſly before death, ſince it is that which withhouldes this ſecond life from vs, wherein abides the accompliſhment of our happines.

To dye, is but to caſt into the wynd the laſt ſigh of our miſeries. *To dye*, is but to make a partition of our ſelues , commending the body to the Earth, & the Soule vnto Heauen. *To dye*, is but to bid a laſt adieu to the world, preferring the company of Angels before that of men . *To dye*, is to be no more vnhappy . *To dye*, is to deſpoyle vs of our infirmities , and to reueſt vs with a nature exempt from ſufferances . O ſweet death , ſince it leades vs to the ſpring of life ! O ſweet death , ſince it giues vs the Eternity of glory in exchange of a moment of dolour ! O ſweet death , ſince it makes vs to reuiue for euer , in a felicity immortall!

O yee Soules of the world , thinke then alwayes

alwayes of death, if you will taſt with pleaſure, the ſweetnes of life. For it ſhalbe euen in this laſt moment, where you ſhal receiue the Crowne of all the others; you may ſigh long inough in your chaynes, you are neuer like to be delyuered thence, if death come not to breake the gates of your priſon. Go before it then, and carry in your countenance the deſire of meeting it, rather then a feare to be touched with it. We ſhould ſuffer with a good cheere, that ſame which we muſt of neceſſity endure. What ſay I endure? Were it a payne, to approach to the end of ones euils? Were it a payne to become for euer exempt from their ſufferances? Let vs rather ſay, a Contentment, ſince thereby do we get forth of ſadnes, to enter into ioy: Let vs call it a Happines, ſince ſo we do abandone the dwelling of misfortunes, to liue eternally in that of the felicities of Heauen.

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That there is no contentment in the world, but to thinke of Death.

CHAP. III.

DEATH hath it's delights, as well as Lyfe. *Iob* was neuer more happy, nor more content then at such tyme, as he saw himselfe vpon the Throne of his dunghill, oppressed vnder the burden of his miseries. He dyed so deliciously in the depth of his dolours, as he would haue suffered alwayes, and haue dyed incessantly in that manner. His wounds serued him as a mirrour to his loue: For in looking thereinto, he became amourous of himselfe, but yet loued he not himselfe, but to dye continually: so pleasing was death vnto him, therby to obey him who had imposed that law vpon him. Loue changes the nature of things. From the tyme that a Soule is chastly taken with this passion, it neuer suffers for the subiect which it loues. The paynes and torments therof are changing the name & quality within the hart. They are Roses rather then Thornes. For if it sigh, it is of ioy and

and not of payne: if it be neceſſary to dy, to conſerue this louely cauſe of its life, it is no death to it, but a meere rapt of contentment which ſeuers it from it ſelfe, in fauour of another ſelfe, which its loues more then it ſelfe: In ſuch wiſe, as it begins to liue content, from the point it begins to dye in; or rather to take its flight, towards the obiect it hath propoſed to it ſelfe, of the full perfection of its loue.

From this goodly verity, do I draw this lyke conſequence. That the hearts wounded with diuine loue do neuer ſigh in their torments, but of the apprehenſion they haue of their ſhort durance: & Death, which to vs ſeemes ſo foule and deformed, vpon the ſudden, changing it's countenance, in their reſpect appeares a thouſand tymes more beautifull then lyfe. Whence it is, that they are alwayes thinking thereon, to to be alwayes content; ſince it is the point where their paynes do termine, & where their felicityes begin. The moſt pleaſing thoughtes, which our ſpirit can tell which way to conceyue, can haue no other obiect then that of contentment, of profit, and of vertue; in ſo much as they are the three ſorts of goods whereto our will is tyed.

Now, where ſhall we find more plea-

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ſure then in the thought of death, ſince it is the great day of our Fortune, where we take poſſeſſion of the delights of Heauen? Where more profit, then in the ſelfe ſame thought; ſince the ſoueraygne good, which is promiſed to vs, is the But, the End, and Obiect thereof? And where more vertue, then to thinke alwayes of Death; whileſt with the armes of theſe ſweet thoughts we triumph ouer vice? I belieue it is impoſſible to taſt pleaſures without thinking of death, in regard theſe delights are continually a flying away, and inceſſantly dy with vs: in ſuch wiſe, that if we cannot reſſent the contentments but within their fruit, & in running alwayes after them; they are rather diſpleaſures, then pleaſures, and therefore we hold there are no greater delights, thē thoſe of thinking of Death, as being the only meane to make them eternall.

When I reſent vnto my ſelfe *S. Laurence* extended vpon the deuouring flames, but yet more burned with the fire of his loue, then with that of his puniſhment, how he cryes out with a cheerefull voyce, in the midſt of the heates which conſume him, to be turned on the other ſide, as if he thought he ſhould not dye, but by halfes, being ſo but halfe burned; I do feele my ſelfe rauiſhed

shed with the same iumps of ioy, that transported him. Death is so welcome to him, as he deliciously roles his body on the coles, as if they were very beds of Roses. So as if he be touched with any payne at all, it is for not suffering it; for that his life being all of loue, finds its element in the fire that consumes it, and therefore he sighes of gladnes in the height of his torments. In effect, how shall he expire admidst those heats, if his hart be all aflame already, & his Soule of Fire? For if he were to be turned into ashes, the stronger must needs preuayle. So as he cannot be consumed, but through the fire of his loue. O sweet encounter! O welcome combat! And yet more deere the Triumph! Death assayles him with flames, it assaults him with heats, but the fire wherewith he is holily burned, triumphes, & reduceth him to ashes, so to render them as cõsecrated. This great Martyr neuer tasted in his life more sweet pleasures thẽ that of feeling himselfe to dy vpon this bed of flames, because resenting death, he felt the delights of immortall life, wherof he made himselfe a crowne.

Kings, Princes, and all those who are raysed to some great fortune, confesse it to be a great pleasure to dy, since they dy euery ho-

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re ſo ſweetly amidſt their greatneſſes. I ſay, *ſo ſweetly*, for their ſpirits and their ſenſes are ſo ſtrongly occupyed with their continuall ioyes, as the Clocke which keepes accompt of the houres of our lyfe, may ſound long inough its 24. houres a day, and they heed it no more, then if they were ſtarke deafe. And the night full of horrour, which repreſents to vs the ſame of the Sepulcher, cānot fright them any more, then if they were quite blind. Needs muſt the charmes of their pleaſures be ſtrong, to make them inſenſible to that which toucheth them ſo neere. *S. Auguſtin* ſayd, how the greatneſſes of the world, aſperſed a kind of leproſy on the ſoule, which euen benummed all the ſenſes of the greateſt Potentats of the earth. In effect, all their ſighes, all their actions do but carry the countenance of Death with them, & yet perceyue they no whit therof. A ſtrange thing! To liue, and not to thinke of lyfe at any tyme, or rather of Death, ſince to liue and dy is but one thing! It is yet true notwithſtanding, that we dye without euer thinking of death; wherin do we ſpoile our ſelues of the ſweeteſt contentments of lyfe, becauſe our whole felicity conſiſts in dying well; and the meanes to incurre a glorious death is alwaies to thinke of the miſeries

of lyfe, to the end to be encouraged through hope, to poſſeſſe the eternall glory which is promiſed vnto vs. We do naturally loue our ſelues with ſo ſtrong affections, that all the powers of the world, are not able to burſt the chaynes thereof.

But what more mighty prooſes may we affoard of this verity, then that of thinking continually of Death, ſince the ſame is the day of our Triumph? *When ſhall I begin to liue not to dye for euer?* ſayth the Royall Prophet. Our lyfe is a continuall combat, and the day of our Death is that of our Victorie. All the Martyrs though they were in the thickeſt of the fight, and alwaies in the action of defending themſelues, yet in this warre of the world, thought themſelues very happy to find the occaſion, where they might make to appeare the laſt endeauours of their courage in the midſt of torments, for that they found in Death the crowne of immortall lyfe. O ſweet lyfe, and cruell the attendance!

As often as we carry our thoughtes beyond Nature, and euen to Heauen, our ſpirit remaines wholy ſatisfyed therewith, becauſe that in this diuine pitch, where it ſees it ſelfe eleuated aboue it ſelfe, it begins to liue the lyfe of Angells. The earth

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is in contempt with it, and when the chaynes of it's body fall off in their firſt condition, it ſuffers their tyranny through conſtraint. So that, if it be permitted vs at all moments, to abãdon the world in thought, to haue thereby ſome feeling of heauenly delights; ſhould we be our enemies ſo farre, as to contemne theſe diuine pleaſures, in groueling without ceaſe in our miſeryes, while the only meanes to be touched with it, is to thinke on Death; ſince there is no other way in lyfe, to fynd the felicity we ſeeke for?

We may piouſly ſay that the Virgin pureſt, & moſt holy, liued on earth a lyfe litle differing from that lyfe which is liued in Heauen; her ſpirit all diuine intertayned it ſelfe alwayes with the Angels, or rather with God himſelf; while ſhe had the glory of bearing him within her ſacred wombe, or in her armes; In ſo much as her life was a voluntary Death, all of loue, ſeeing that through loue, ſhe tooke no pleaſure but to dye, ſo to poſſeſſe more perfectly the onely obiect of her lyfe. She prized not her dayes but in the expectation of their laſt night, as knowing its darknes was to produce the brightnes of an eternal day, wherof herſelfe had beene the *Aurora*. O how ſweet would

it be, to be able to liue in that ſort, for to dye delicioufly! It is not a life truly immortall to be alwayes thinking of death, if death afford vs immortality? *How faſtidious is the life of the world*, the Prophet cryes? Let vs now then be ioyning our voyce to his cryes, and ſay, that death only is to be wiſhed for. All the holy Soules, which in imitation of my Sauiour, haue adorned theſelues with thornes, haue been turning the face to the tombwards, there to gather Roſes. With death it is, where they termine their deareſt hopes. So as if they liue content, it is not but through the ſweet hope which they haue to dye.

O yee prophane Spirits, who ſacrifice not but to voluptuouſnes, pull off the hood of paſſion that thus blinds you, to deſtroy thoſe aultars of Idolatry, whereon you immolate your ſelues, without thinking of it, for puniſhment of your crymes. If you will know the true pleaſure indeed, it conſiſts of thinking of Death, as of the Spring that produceth our delights. Our Crownes are at the end of their cariere, nor ſhall we euer come to poſſeſſe the Soueraygne God, to which we aſpire with ſo much feruour and vnreſt, but by the way of Death. *When ſhall I ceaſe to lyue with men*, ſayth *Dauid*? He is euen

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uen troubled amidst the greatnesses of the earth. His Scepter and his Crowne are so contemptible to him, as he would willingly change his Throne with the dunghill of *Iob*, on condition to dye with his constancy. To liue, is no more then to be sequestred from that which one loues: and after God, what may we loue? After him what may we desire? So as, if now these holy affections & these diuine wishes cannot looke on glory, but in passing by the Sepulcher, let vs thinke continually on Death, as of the way we take, & which we are yet to make. This is the onely meane to render vs content, for that these thoughtes are inseparable from the eternall felicity which is promised vs.

That it belongeth but only to good Spirits, to thinke continually of Death.

CHAP. IIII.

SVCH as know the Art of familiarizing death with life, through continual remẽbrance of their end, do neuer change the countenance in any perils. They

They looke to resume both their bloud, and life at once, with the same eyes they behold the things which are agreable to them: so as they remayne inuincible in their miseryes, through the knowledge they haue of their condition. Wounds neuer hurt their soules, and all the maladies wherewith they may be touched, afflict but their body only. Their good Spirit habituated with the ordinary encounter of a thousand sad accidents inseparable from life, tasts their bitternes in its turne, and feeles their thornes without any murmuring. The end of all actions ought to be the first ayme of the iudgement that conceiues them, if it will shun the griefe of hauing done them. So as from the tyme that we are capable of reason, are we to serue our selues of it, to consider the necessity of our mortall and transitory condition; that the continuall obiect of our end, may serue as a condition & meanes to arriue happily thereunto.

The wiser sort are those, who repent at least, for that which they haue done; & true wisedome consists in not cõmitting folly. And what more great may a man admit, thẽ that, to neuer thinke of death, since it is the end where all our actions receiue their prize or payne? *Remember thou Death* (the Wisemã sayth)

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ſayth) *and thou ſhalt neuer ſyn*. O glorious remembrãce, who raiſeſt vs to ſo high a degree of honour, as neuer to offend God, which is the only perfection of the Soule, next to the knowing him, and louing him withall! O glorious remembrance, which changeſt our frayle and guilty Nature into one which is wholy innocent! O glorious remembrance that makeſt vs deliciouſly to breath the ayre of Grace, ſince they liue in the eſtate to dye euery hower, for to liue eternally! O glorious remembrance, which on earth makeſt vs the inhabitants of Heauen? O glorious remembrance, where the Spirit finds both its Good, and repoſe.

When I repreſent to my ſelfe the pittiful eſtate of our Condition, I am afrayd of my ſelfe: for diſaſters and miſeryes do ſo attend vs at the heeles, as there is almoſt no *medium* betweene dying and lyuing. We ſigh without ceaſe, the whole ayre we breath, & our very being that ſo tumbles alwayes towards its end, wiſheth not, but its not being, whither euery inſtant leades it without interminſſion. What better thoughtes may we now conceiue, then of theſe verities; ſince it is too true, that we are borne vnhappy, for to liue miſerable, vntill the point of dying? And the only meane to change this miſery into

into happines, is euery moment to thinke vpon it, for feare of falling euer into neglect, or forgetfulnes of our selues.

There are feeble Spirits, who dare not carry their thoughts vnto the end of the carriere of their life; they euen faynt in the mid way; their shadow affrights them; they feare euery thing they imagine, without considering the obiect of their feare subsists not but in their fancy only, and how by that meanes, to become ingenious to torment themselues. To feare death, is to feare that which is not, since it is but a mere priuatiõ; and to haue a further feare of the thought is to fly the shadow of his shadow which is nothing. Wherein these Spirits do but feed their owne weaknes, liuing in death, and dying in their life, without dreaming once of Death. But what goodly matter (will they say, so to mayntaine their errour) for one to thinke of that, which naturally all the world abhors? Is it not to be miserable inough to be borne, and to lyue, & dye in myseries, without one be burying his spirit before his Body, through the continual memory of his end? It is euen as much, as to make ones selfe vnhappy before hand, so to dreame of the euils, which we cánot auoyd. It is inough to endure thẽ constantly, when

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they arriue, without going to meet with thē, as if it could euer arriue too late.

Feeble apparences of Reason! Admit that Nature abhorres Death, as the ruine of this strait vniō of the body with the soule, know we not also how this nature, blind in all its passions, and brutish in all its feelings, takes alwayes the false good for the true, not being able to worke, but by the Senses, which as materiall, take its part? To beliene now that our miseryes augment, by this thought, that we lyue & dye miserable, were much; while on the cōtrary we do blunt the point of their thornes, in so thinking of them, in regard this continuall consideration of our misfortunes in this life, makes vs to take the way of vertue, for the attayning one day, the glory, and felicity of the other. To imagine it also to be a griefe, to dreame assiduously of Death, as of an ineuitable euill, is a meere imaginatiō which cannot subsist, but within it selfe. For we are neuer to thinke of Death, but as of a necessary good, rather then of an infallible euill, since otherwise, it is nothing of it selfe. We should only represent to our selues that we are to change both condition and life; and how this change, can be no wayes made, but at the end of our course, whither we are continually running

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and that without pauſe awhit. Our being of it ſelfe deſtroyes it ſelfe, by little and litle, withall things els of the world beſides. It is a funerall Torch burning by a Sepulcher, that ſhines as long as the wax of our body laſts, while euen the leaſt blaſt of diſaſter is able to extinguiſh it for euer. For howbeit the earth be large and ſpacious, yet hath it noe voyd place, in its whole extent, but where to point euery one his Tombe; euen as nature, which though fruitfull of it ſelfe to produce many wonders, yet finds an impotency withall to engender twice its lyuing workes.

The Fables informe vs well, how *Euridice* was delyuered from her chaines in Hell but not from her priſon; ſhe had the power to approach vnto the bounds of the diſmall place of her captiuity, but not to ſet her ſelfe at liberty. So as if the Poets, within the Empire which they haue eſtabliſhed to themſelues, haue religiouſly held this inuiolable law, of not to be able to dye twice; with what reſpect ought we to adore the truth ſo knowne to euery one, and ſo ſenſible to all the world? And the knowledge which we haue thereof, ſhould vnceſſantly draw our ſpirits, to theſe thoughtes, to the end they ſtray not, in the labyrinths of ſin, which is

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the only Death of the Soule.

When I repreſent to my ſelfe the faces, which theſe men of the world do make when they are ſpoken to of Death, I haue much ado to belieue, they are capable of reaſon, ſince they faile thereof, in the conſideration of this important verity, that they are but meere putrefaction, and a little duſt, ready to be caſt into the wind in the twinckling of an eye: That walke they where they will, they but trample their Tombe vnderfoote, ſince the earth ſeemes to chalẽge its earth whereof they are moulded and framed. They ſhut their eares to the diſcourſes that are made to them of Death, which they are one day to incurre; and open them to hearken to the Clocke, whoſe houres & minutes inſenſibly cõduct them into the Sepulcher, whither willingly they would neuer go. In ſo much, as howbeit they are haſting euery moment to death, yet they dare not be caſting their eyes on the way they hould, as if the ſight could forward their paces: wherin truly, I can not abide, nor excuſe their puſillanimity, ſince the danger whereinto they put themſelues, produceth an irreparable domage.

This ſame is an infallible maxime, That ſuch as neuer dreame of death, do neuer thinke

ke of God, foraſmuch as one cannot come at him, but by Death onely. On the other-ſide, not to thinke euer of the end, which ſhould crowne our workes, were as much, as to contemne the meanes of our Saluation and ſo to forget our Sauiour who with his proper lyfe, hath ranſomed ours. The eye cannot ſee at one and the ſelfe ſame tyme two different obiects, in diſtance one from the other. The lyke may we ſay, of the Spirit, though it's powers be diuerſe, yet can it not faſten its affections vpon two ſubiects at once, vnequall and ſeuerall one from the other. If it loue the Earth, then is Heauen in contempt with it: if it haue an extreme paſſion of ſelfe-loue to its lyfe, the diſcourſes of death are dreadfull to it. And by how much it ſequeſters it ſelfe from thoughtes of its end, the leſſe approacheth it to God through thoſe very thoghts. *Lord, I will thinke of my laſt dayes* (ſayd the Prophet) *for to remember thee.* This great King and great Saint withall, did belieue the memory of Death was inſeparable from that of his Mayſter, ſince dye he needs muſt one day himſelfe.

O ſweet Death, and yet more ſweet the remembrance, if it be true, that it powerfully reſiſts agaynſt all manner of vice! We

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cannot know good ſpirits, but throgh good actions, & there is none better in lyfe, then then of preparing ones ſelfe for death. Whatſoeuer we can do which is admirable indeed looſeth the whole admiration, if it haue not relatiõ therunto, nor may a man be thought to haue lyued, but to dy rather, who thinkes not euer of this ſweet neceſſity, whereof the law diſpenſeth with no man. The greateſt perfection conſiſts, for one to know himſelfe, ſo as the Spirit cannot make its Eminency appeare, but by beholding it ſelfe in its nature, created to render the continuall homage of reſpect to its Creatour. And being abaſed in this neceſſary ſubmiſſion, it ſhould conſider that its immortality boũds vpon eyther an eternall payne, or els on a lyke glory, and that it is not at all, but to be happy for euer, or eternally vnhappy. Vpon theſe conſiderations, it may found the verity of its glory, ſince it could not tell how to purchaſe eyther a iuſter, or a greater then that of knowing well it ſelfe. For as then, its diuine thoughts make it to take it's flight towards the place of its origin, not prizing the earth, but to purchaſe there the merit of Crownes, which it pretends to poſſeſſe in Heauen.

Among the infinite number of errours, which

which make the greateſt part of the world to be guilty of crime, this ſame is one of the moſt common of al; To eſteeme (forſooth) thoſe extremely, who are eloquent, be it of the tongue or pen, and to put them in the rancke of the more excellent Spirits: As thoſe alſo, who through a thouſand ſleights, being al very criminal, cã tell how to amaſſe a great deale of riches to ariue to the higheſt dignityes. Thus do the ſpirits of the world, and are ſo eſteemed by ſuch as they. But I anſwere with the Prophet, how all their wiſedome is folly before God. The good ſpirits indeed are alwaies adhering to good, and there is no other in lyfe, then that; to be allwayes thinking of death, for to learne to dy well. Since in this apprentiſhip only, are comprized all the ſciences of the world. Eloquennce hath ſaued neyther *Cicero*, nor *Demoſthenes*. Riches haue vndone *Creſus*; & greatneſſes haue thrown *Belus* King of *Cyprus* out of his Throne, into a dunghill. To what purpoſe ſerues it, to know how to talke well, if we ſpeake not of things more neceſſary, and more important of our ſaluation? To what end ſerues it to be rich, ſince we muſt needs be a dying miſerable?

On the other ſide, there is no other riches then that of Vertue; and I had much rather

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poſſeſſe one aboue, then the crownes of all the Kings of the World below. What pleaſure may a man take to behold himſelfe rayſed to Thrones, ſince he muſt needs in a moment, be deſcending into the Sepulcher? What is become of all thoſe, who haue beene mounting the degrees of Fortune, & beene ſeene on the top of moſt eminent dignities? Diſaſtres, or time which changes all things, haue let them fall into the Tombe; ſo as there remaynes no more of thē, but the bare remembrance, that ſometymes they haue beene. Conſider we then, and boldly let vs ſay, how it belongs to good Spirits only, to be euery houre; thinking of Death, ſince we dy euery hower: That theſe thoughtes are the moſt ſublime, wherewith a good ſoule may entertaine it ſelfe: That of al the wayes which may lead vs to Heauen, there is none more aſſured, then that of continually thinking of the laſt inſtant, which muſt iuſtify or condemne all the other of our life; for that our actiōs take their Rule frō theſe thoughtes to receiue the price of them. All the reſt is but vanity, and meere folly.

Out of theſe thoughtes, there is no good; Out of theſe thoughtes, there is no repoſe. Who thinks not of death, thinks of nothing ſince al ſeeme to termine at this laſt moment

The moſt happy are miſerable, if this thoght make not vp the greateſt part of their happines. And the richeſt are in great neceſſity, if they dreame not of that, of their mortall condition. Whatſoeuer is ſaid, if Death be not the obiect of the whole diſcourſe, they are but words of ſmoke, that turne into wynd. Whatſoeuer is done, if Death be not the obiect of the actions, all the effects are vnprofitable. In fine, all glory, all good, all repoſe, & all the contentment of the world, conſiſts in thinking alwayes of Death; ſince theſe thoughtes are the only meanes to atteyne the eternall felicity, wherto they termine. And a generous Spirit cannot giue forth more pregnant prooſes of its goodnes, then in thinking on the Death of the body, whiles euen of this moment depends the life of the ſoule.

How thoſe ſpirits that thinke continually of Death, are eleuated aboue all the Greatneſſe of the Earth.

CHAP. V.

IT is impoſſible to know the world without contemning it ſince the diſaſtres and miſeryes, wherewith it is ſtuft, are the

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continuall obiects of this knowledge. And from the point that our iudgment hath broken the viſards of the falſe and imaginary goods, which vnder the maske of their goodly apparences deceyue our will, it ſuddenly abhors in them, that very ſame which paſſionately heertofore it ſeemed to cheriſh. Whence it happens that we can neuer enter into knowledg of the world, but we acquit our ſelues of it at the ſame time throgh a ſorrow, for not hauing deſpiſed it ſooner; ſince all its goods are but in apparence onely, and its euils in effect. So as, if it be a Tree we may boldly ſay, that miſeryes are the leaues therof, misfortunes the branches, aud death the fruit. And it is vnder the ſhadow of this vnhappy Tree, where our forefathers haue built our firſt tombe.

Man may ſeeme to diſguiſe himſelfe, if he will, vnder the richeſt ornaments of Greanes, & with the fayreſt liueries of Fortune. Well may he trample Scepters and Crownes vnderfoot, in the proudeſt condition, whereto Nature and Lot might haue rayſed him vp. He is yet the ſame; I meane a peece of corruption, ſhut vp in a skin of fleſh, whereof the wormes haue taken poſſeſſion already from the momẽt of his birth. Let him meaſure as long as he will a thou-

ſand

ſand tymes a day, the ample ſpaces of the world, with this proud ambition, to make a conqueſt of them all; yet he muſt be fayne to let them fall, if he would find the true meaſures of them without compaſſe, enclo-ſed all within ſeauen foot of earth, which ſhall marke out his Tombe. If he aſſemble with the ſame ambition, all the Thrones of Kings, for to make them ſerue as Aultars, whereof himſelfe ſhall be the Idol; he ſhall not chooſe but lend his eares to the Oracles of ſweet Neceſſity, though cruel for him: for he muſt dy, and conſequently ſerue one day as a victime vpon thoſe very Aultars, where they ſhall be yiel ding of Sacrifices to his, perſon.

Let him beſtow Empires, as fauours, Kingdomes for preſents, and whole Cities for the leaſt recompence, and then when he returnes into himſelfe, for to know what he wants, he ſhall find, that he needs no more, but a peece of a ſheet to ſhrowd (with all his miſeryes) the horrour of his infection and corruption. Let the Sunne neuer riſe, but to giue light to his triumphes, if he ioyne not to his victories thoſe other of his paſſions, he ſhall celebrate but his owne ouerthrow, and triumph on himſelfe without thinking of it. Let the heauens be rayning on his head

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as many felicityes, as there are diſaſters on earth ; all his happynes concludes with Death, while by the way of his proſperities he goes on euery moment to the Sepulcher. In fine, although through his great poſſeſſiō of goods, he know not what to deſire, nor what to looke for ; yet ſhall I not forbeare ere the leſſe to put him in the rancke of the moſt miſerable of the world, if vertue be not the richeſt of his treaſures. For not changing his condition awhit, in the accompliſhmēt of his greatneſſes, and of all his delightes, he is alwayes the ſame, a little aſhes, a little duſt, a little earth. And howbeit of the aſhes of the wood of *Libanum*, of the duſt of *Azure*, or of ſome more noble or fertile earrh ; yet is all but meere putrefaction, and the cruſt of all theſe goodly apparences is full of infection.

I eſteeme him very happy, great & rich, who contents himſelfe, with the meriting of theſe greatneſſes, theſe felicities, and theſe riches: for the glorious contempt which he makes of thē, for being abuſed in the knowledge of himſelfe, he beholds all the world beneath him, and deſires but the continuaniō of his repoſe ; ſince in the only thought of Death, he poſſeſſeth al the goods of life. The great Monarkes of the world ſeeke the intētions of lyuing happy in their greatneſſes; &

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he, the meane of dying content in his miſe-
ies: they are alwayes in care, to extend the
ounds of their Empire; & he pleaſeth him-
elfe to bound his ambition, with what he
poſſeſſeth, ſince he wants not any thing for
is voyage. They make a maſſe of riches; &
e takes glory in pouerty, knowing that the
icheſt are robbed at the end of the courſe of
ife, and that we go forth of the world, in
ike manner as we enter into it, with the firſt
abit of thoſe miſeries, which we haue in-
erited from our parents. In ſuch ſort as
hinking perpetually of Death, in the way
where it is to approach euery moment, he
aſts not his eyes vpon greatneſſes, but to
aue pitty on thoſe who poſſeſſe them. He
contemplates not the fauours of Fortune,
ut to publiſh the inconſtancy thereof. So
f he regard Thrones, it is but to meaſure
he depth of the precipices that enuiron thē,
ince all crownes for him are made both of
are and thornes. And the Scepters as light
s reedes, giue him not any other Enuy
hen that of trampling them vnderfoot, in-
teed of holding them in his hands, ſince
hey are the markes of a glory of ſmoake,
which reſolues into nothing, to returne to
ts firſt beginning.

There is no doubt, but ſuch as thinke cōti-
nually

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nually of Death, are rayſed aboue all the greatneſſes of the earth, becauſe Eternity is the obiect of their thoughtes. So as if they deſire greatneſſes, they wiſh they may be eternall: if they enuy Treaſures, they marke the poſſeſſion of them beyond Nature, to the end Inconſtancy of tyme may not bereaue them of them. They haue no ambitiõ for this vayne glory of the world, which the leaſt miſchance may change into infamy; nor for theſe Crownes, which a litle wind of diſgrace, makes to fal from the head. All their glory is to thinke of death, for to be able to attayne at the laſt inſtant of lyfe, the Crowne of immortality, wherein conſiſts the perfection of all felicityes poſſible to be deſired.

Greatneſſes are of the ſame nature, with thoſe who poſſeſſe thẽ, they are but ſmoke, they are but wind; for we ſee thẽ to vaniſh away in the twinckling of an eye, with their ſubiect. So as if they ſeeme to ſubſiſt, notwithſtanding in their continuall flight they are changing the countenance euery houre. To be great aboue the common ſort of men, in honours and in riches onely, is to be miſerable, if the true greatnes of man conſiſt in meriting all, and poſſeſſing nothing. In ſo much, as he who thinkes of

Death

Death in despising the felicityes of this life, makes himselfe to be worthy of the glory of the other; and in these only thoughtes is he raised so aboue himself, as if he were capable of vanity, he would not know himself. For from the tyme, that he ioynes the thoughts of Death, to the verity of his mortall condition, he tasts before hand in the midest of his course, the sweetnes of the goods, which he pretends to receyue at the end. I would say, that the sensible imaginations which he hath of dying cõtinually (as there is nothing more certayne then it) makes him to tread vnder foote, all the greatnesses of the earth, since that his soule directs his lookes vnto Heauen,

In effect, were it not as much, as to offẽd a Prince, to offer him at sea, the Crowne of a Kingdome, in the midst of stormes and tempests, wherewith his ship were miserably tossed? or els at such tyme, as he were seene to be taken with a mortall disease? For he might answere very pertinently, they should attend him, to make him those offers on the shore, or when he were recouered of his health. Now, we seeme to represent this Prince, since like vnto him, do we floate vpon this sea of this world, where the Ship of our life, is incessantly tossed with diuers misfor-

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misfortunes. Fortune comes to preſent vs in the fury of this tempeſt both Scepters and Crownes; would it not be accounted raſh now for vs, to receiue them at her hands, in this pittifull eſtate whereinto we are reduced, & not to hope for a calme or ceſſation, for feare of ſeeing our hopes quite buryed with our life, in a cruel ſhipwracke, whoſe danger euen followes vs as neere, as the ſhadow doth the body? So as if ſhe make vs the ſame offers, during the mortal malady wherewith we are ſeiſed from the moment of our natiuity (ſince we begin to dy, from the inſtant that we begin to liue) were it not a folly to accept them? And for vs to anſwere her, and to wiſh her to expect till we come vpon the ſhore, is a vayne attendance; while there is no other port, in the ſea of life, then that of the tombe: and to attend alſo for the cure of this contagious malady, which we haue taken of our parents, were to expect that ſame, which ſhall neuer come to paſſe. So as indeed we ſhould be throwing al theſe Crownes at her head, and make vſe of the Scepter, ſhe preſents vs with, as of a ſtaffe to be auendged of her for her perfidiouſnes, & to teſtify to her that our conſtancy ſcornes her leuity; and that our contentment & repoſe, depends not a whit of the rowling of her

her wheele, if we learne euery day to liue forth of her Empire.

Let vs conclude then and say, that spirits that know wel the art of thinking of Death do marke out the thrones of their glory in heauen, not being able to find any thing on Earth, that were worthy of their greatnes. Hence it is, they take such pleasure, to dy without cease and to increase their contentment yet further, that they alwayes are thinking vpon it. O sweet remembrance of death, a thousand times more sweet then all the delights of life! O cruell forgetfulnes of this necessity, a thousand tymes more cruell, then all the paynes of the world! O sweet memory of our end, where begins our only felicity! O glorious obliuion of our mortal conditiō, the only cause of our disasters! Let vs not liue then, but to thinke on the delight of Death; & let vs not dye but to contemne the pleasure of lyfe: let vs forget all, but the remembrance of Death. Let vs loue nothing, but its thoughtes: and neuer esteeme, but the only actions which haue relation to this last, since this is that alone, whence we are to receyue eyther price, or payne.

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A Contemplation vpon the Tombe of Alexander *the Great.*

CHAP. VI.

OALL yee Great Kings, Loe I heere ſommon you to appeare about this Tombe, to behould therein the wormes, the corruption and infection of the greateſt, the happyeſt, the mightieſt, & the moſt dreadfull Monarch of the world; & to ſay all in a word, of Great *Alexander*; whoſe Valour could neuer admit compariſon; whoſe Victories haue had no other bounds, then thoſe of the Vniuerſe; and whoſe Triumphes, haue had all the Heauens for witnes, all the Earth for Spoyles, for ſlaues all Mortalls, for Trumpet Renowne, & Fortune for Guide. Deſcend then, from your thrones vpon this dunghill, where lyes the companion of your glory, and your greatneſſes. Behould and contemplate this Pourtrait of your ſelues drawne to the lyfe, after the originall of your miſeries.

Cyrus, approach you vnto this vnlucky place, vpon your Chariot al of maſſy gould, and

and come attended with that magnificent pompe, which made all the world idolatrous in admiration of it ; that the infinite number of your subiects, may be an infinite number of witnesses, to conuince you of vanity and folly, in behoulding this Victorious Prince heere beseiged by all sorts of miseryes, within a litle hole, which serues as bounds and limirs to his power.

Cõsider, how this great Taker of Townes is surprized himselfe by the wormes; how this Triumphant souldier is defeated by thẽ, & how this Inuincible captaine, hath beene vanquished by death, and brought into this deplorable estate, wherein you see him. Are you not ashamed to be seated in that glittering Chariot; since needs you must descend thence to enter into this dismall dwelling, where the wormes attend your corruption? This great number of subiects, which enuiron you on all sides, to set forth your glory, isa troup of the miserable. For they dye in following you; and on which side socuer you go, Tyme conducts you all togeather into the Tombe.

Impose your lawes vpon al the people of the Earth, yet needs must you receiue those same of Death. Build you as long as you wil a thousand proud Pallaces in your Em-

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pire, you cānot hold them but in fee-farme though you be the proprietary thereof, becauſe euery moment you are at the point of departing. Well may you decke your ſelfe vp with the richeſt robes of vanity, and play the God heere beneath, with Crowne on the head and ſcepter in the hand; yet looke what you are, conſider what you are like to be, & contemplate your miſeries at leyſure, in the mirour of this ſepulcher. To day you loure on Heauen with an arrogant eye; and to morrow you ſhal be ſeene metamorphozed into a ſtinking peece of earth. To day you make your ſelfe adored of ſuch as haue no iudgment, but in the eyes only; and to morrow ſhall you be ſacrificed in the ſight of all the world for expiatiō of your crimes, and hardly ſhall be found a handfull of your aſhes, ſo true it is, that you are nothing.

Xerxes, deſcend you a little, from the top of that mountayne of annoyes, where they ſad thoughtes do hould you beſieged within this Vale of diſaſters and of miſeryes, to behold therein, the pittifull ouerthrow of the proudeſt Conquerour of the world. Spare your teares, to mourne vpon his Tombe, if you will but acquit your ſelfe of the iuſteſt homage, you may yield to his memory. You weep before hand, for the

Death

Death of your ſouldiers, in foreſeeing their end, with that of the world. What will you ſay now of the death of this great Captayne who for a laſt glory, after ſo many triumphes is deuoured of wormes and metamorphoſed into a ſtuffe alof corruption, encompaſſed all with horrour and amazement. So as if you will needs be ſatisfying your ſelfe, afford your teares for your owne proper harmes, ſince you are to incurre the ſame lot, without reſpect, eyther of your greatnes, or power. All your armyes are not of force inough to warrant you from Death: you muſt bow your necke vnder the yoke of this neceſſity, whoſe rules are without exceptiõ, whoſe law diſpenſeth not with any.

Alexander is dead, *Cyrus* his predeceſſour hath dyed alſo, after a thouſand other Kings who haue gone before him, and you runne now after them: but to me it ſeemes, you carry too great a port of Greatnes with you. The earth wherof you are moulded & framed, demaunds but her earth; you muſt quit your ſelfe of all, and your ſcepter and crowne ſhall not be taken for more, at that laſt inſtant, then as ſheephookes: for that if we be different in the manner of liuing, we are yet all equall in the neceſſity of dying. Now therfore, it is a vanity to ſay, you are

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of the race of Gods . Come & ſee heere, the place of your firſt begining, for as you are borne of corruption, ſo you returne to putrefaction. If you doubt thereof as yet, approach with your infected fleſh to theſe rotten bones, & with your clay to theſe aſhes: If they differ in ought, it can be but in coulour only.

Tell me, to what end ſerue all thoſe Statues of your reſemblance, which you cauſed to be erected on the lands of your Empire, ſince tyme deſtroyes & ruines the original? Thinke you, belike, they dare not medle with thoſe pourtraits, which are but vayne ſhadowes of a body of ſmoke? You trouble your ſelfe too much, to make it credulous to the world, that you are immortall, as if this beliefe could affoard you immortality. If you haue but neuer ſo litle knowledge in you, know you not your owne miſfortunes? If you haue ſenſe, haue you no feeling of your miſeries? I know well you are a King, but a King of the dead, ſince al thoſe to whome you giue the law, do receyue it from Tyme, which makes them to dye euery houre. Admit you be the chiefe of men, yet if they be miſerable all of them together, as ſubiect to a thouſand ſorts of accidents; may we not well ſay, that you are the vn-

happyeſt

happyeſt of them all. You play the omnipotent, when you are ſet vpon your Throne of ſnow, not conſidering the while, that within your Pallace, as well as without, you are but a heap of duſt, which euery litle blaſt of wind, may ſcatter on the ground to diſſolue it into nothing.

Apelles, thou took'ſt a pride to be called the Paynter of *Alexander*; come then, and ſee the ſubiect of thy glory, if thy heart ſerue thee to endure the horrour of it, This ſame, is that *Alexander*, whoſe Maieſty ſo dazeled thee heertofore, and whoſe ſtench at this tyme ſo infects the whole world. I miſtruſt thy audacious penſill to be able to repreſent the greatnes of his miſeryes to the lyfe. Doſt thou remember him at ſuch tyme as thou dreweſt him, armed at all points, vpon his *Bucephalus*, euen vpon the point of his forcible retayning the laſt crowne of his Triumphes, not hauing ought to conquer els beſides? And ſometymes agayne ſitting on his Throne with the Crowne of a Conquerour on his head, and with the Scepter of the Empire of the world in his hand? Durſt thou maintayne now, theſe aſhes are the draughts of thy originall? if thou wilt ſaue thy credit from reproach, do thou imitate *Thymantes*, draw the curteyne ouer *Alexan-*

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ders face, that he may not be knowne, ſo is he no more himſelfe.

And thou *Liſyppus*, who employed ſo oft, haſt made vſe of ſuch rich materials to maintaine this great Monarch on foot; theſe rotten bones, which make vp this Carkaſſe which thou ſeeſt, haue beene the ſubiect, both of thy glory, and thy labours. If it be true, that water eates into the ſtone, then weep thou freely on thy owne workes, to deſtroy them thy ſelfe, ſince their obiect is buryed, while tyme prepares their Sepulcher.

Ceſar, *Mark-Antony*, *Pompey*, *Annibal*, and *Scipio*, ſtep you a little aſide from the way of your Triumphs, to come, and ſee as you paſſe, the miſerable ſpoyles of this great King alwayes victorious, of this great Monarke alwayes triumphant. Approach you vnto his Tombe, behold, contemplate, & ſmell the horrible corruption; would you ſay this carkaſſe heere that ſtinkes ſo abhominably, were the body of that inuincible *Alexander*? whoſe valour hath deſpoyled the earth of its Laurelles, and who being not able yet, to bound his ambition, with the compaſſe of one world, goes ſeeking him another; howſoeuer in digging the earth, he hath found but the place of this Sepulcher, where he

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is buryed with all his greatneſſes. All thoſe gallant Courtiers, that followed him, are changed into wormes, and are nothing els but meere putrefaction; and their proud Pallaces into this litle trench; and all their ornaments into theſe ſpiders webbes, which encompaſſe him round.

Caſt your eyes vpon theſe images of horrour: This is the draught of him, who ſtiled himſelfe the ſonne of *Iupiter-Ammon*, & who exacted Aultars from men, to make himſelf adored. Iudge you now of the perfection of this Idol. Go your wayes into all places, where your ambition guides you, conquer all, triumph vpon all, and for a laſt victory make Fortune herſelfe as your Tributary, that the rouling of her wheele may receaue its motion from that of your wills; al theſe Victoryes, and all theſe Triumphes, accompanied with all the glory of the world, ſhal not warrant you awhit from Death: nor ſhall all the perfumes of *Arabia* exempt your fleſh from putrefaction.

Ceſar, diſpute no more with *Mark-Antony* about the Empire of the earth: Nature would haue you to take vp this difference betweene you, ſince neyther of you both cá iuſtly pretend, but to ſeauen foot thereof. And if you can hardly belieue it, meaſure

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you the ſpaces of *Alexanders* Tombe, who hath worne the Crowne vpon his head, which you deſire. This is the onely meane to finiſh your quarrell, rather then to quenh your fury, in the bloud of your ſubiects. *Ceſar*, play not the proud man ſo, in the midſt of thy felicityes; it is now a long while, ſince that death hath ſtood waiting vpon thee, vnder the Throne where thou ſitteſt in the Senate, for to let thee know, and perceaue at once, that he mockes at thy greatneſſes, and contemnes thy power, by drowning thy lyfe within thy bloud.

Stoope a little to the pitch of thy vanity *Mark-Anthony*, there is no likelyhood at all thou ſhouldſt euer be triumphing ouer thin enemy, ſince thou canſt not ſo much as vanquiſh thy paſſions, which is the beſt victory that we can poſſibly obteyne of our ſelues. Thou ſhalt euen looſe the Empire of all the Earth, where thou ſhalt find ſo ſhamefull a Tombe, as they ſhall not dare to ſpeake of thy lyfe, by reaſon of thy Death.

Annibal, thou glorieſt much in entring in Triumph, within thy proud Citty of *Carthage*, after ſo many, and ſo great victories, which rayſe thee to the higheſt Throne of Honour; but takſt not heed the while, that if thou leadeſt thine enemies in triumph, vices

ces seeme to triumph vpon thy foule, shewes that miseries do the like with thy body. Ambition againe, if Fortune fauour thee to day as king, she will dregg thee to morrow as a slaue. To day the Lawrels grow on thy head, and to morrow thorns shal grow beneath thy feet. to let thee see that nothing is certaine in the world, but change, since it changes euery houre, in making all things else, to change their countenance withall. I do euen flout at thy vanity; for the witnesses of thy glory, & very *Carthage* it selfe, which is the theatre therof, shal follow soone after the course of of thy ruine.

Pompey, flatter not thy selfe thus in thy prosperities, the very same Sunne, which hath seene them grow vp, shall see them wither ere long. It is true that all the world euen trembles at thine armes. Renowne hath no voyce, but to publish thy valour; but how then? knowest thou not, how the self same fate which affords thee Crownes & Scepters, takes them away againe when it pleaseth? Victory pursues thee euery where, both on sea and land; but this is but for a while. After the moment of thy birth, death aymes at thy head, to pull off all the Lawrells thence, wherewith thou hast so often crowned it; and knowing that the sea hath

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no rockes for thee, it hath scored out thy Sepulcher already on the shore.

Weepe, weepe you great Kings, at the sight of these miseries, or rather at the feeling of your owne. If the greatest of the world, be nought but corruption, what shall become of you? If this inuincible Monarch, who had so many markes of immortality with him, be the prey of wormes, & sport of the winds, what shalbe your lot? Whereto may Fortune seeme to reserue you? Go to then, I graunt you, whatsoeuer you can possibly demaund; I affoard your ambition an age of lyfe, an Empire of a new world, & a happy successe to all your desires. What shall become of you after all this, since this long lyfe, this glorious Empire, & all your felicityes togeather must haue an end, with this world? As often, as you shall issue forth of your condition, for to enter into the forgetfulnes of your selfe, you do send your thoughtes into this tombe; and you shall suddenly return from this wandering. Do not flatter your selfe; your Crowne is but of earth, as the head that weares it. Your Scepter is but a sticke of wood, subiect to corruption, as your hand is that holdes it: and the rest of your ornaments are but a worke of wormes, wherof you are the prey.

Iudge

Iudge you then, whether your vanity, can ſubſiſt any long tyme, vpon ſuch feeble foū-dations, or no.

You are accuſtomed lykely, at ſuch time as you build ſome proud pallace or other, to go a walking in the compaſſe thereof, taking pleaſure to admire the goodly ſcituation, where you haue deſtined the place of your dwelling: do you the like with your tombe, go viſit euery day the ſolitary place where you are to lodge for ſo long a tyme; and this wilbe the onely meane, to make death euen as ſweet vnto you, as life it ſelfe; and to bury your pride, your vanity, and al your vices together, before your body; according to the ſaying of the Wiſeman, *for he that thinkes continually of death, ſhall neuer ſtray from the way of vertue.*

He that thinkes alwayes of Death, is the Richeſt of the world.

CHAP. VII.

IMERVAILE much, that Cicero ſhould put this Truth into Paradox; *That he* (forſooth) *is the richeſt, who is moſt cōtent*, Whiles

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les there is nothing more certaine then it? For the Soule hath no other riches, more properly her owne, nor more in affect, then that of contentment. In what condition ſoeuer, where a man finds himſelfe with repoſe of Spirit, may he well be ſaid to be perfectly rich. True treaſures are not of gould of ſiluer, or of other things of like valew, but rather of good actions, ſince by their price one may buy Eternity. Beſides whoſe fruition, what may we deſire? Beſides whoſe glory, what may we pretend? With-all the riches of the world, we can buy no more, then the world it ſelfe. Alas, what good in the poſſeſſion thereof, if it be wholy ſtuffed with euils? See we not euery momẽt how it quite deſtroyes it ſelfe, and that it runnes wirhout ceaſe, to its end, as the Sũne to its Weſt?

The richeſt are ordinarily, the moſt vnfortunate of all others: for that hauing by lot of nature, ſome little Empire on earth, they fall abſolutely to attribute the Soueraignity thereof to thẽſelues; & in the vayne thoughts of their greatneſſes, ſeeme neuer to ſigh but for them, nay they euen dy with them. O dreadfull Death! He then may be only ſaid to be rich, who makes profeſſion to follow vertue; his way being bordered

with

with Thornes, represents to vs that same of Death, whose Roses are at the end of the course, to crowne our labours withall. In so much as we cannot loue vertue, but with the continuall thoughts of Death; since to see its Body, we had need to seuer our selues from the shadowes of the Earth. We much admire some feeble ray of its image only, vnder the obscure veyle of our mortall condition; but that only in *idea*, and as it were in a dreame. We had need to awake yet once more, and come to be reborne from our ashes againe, as the Phenix, in the presence of the great Sunne of Iustice. I would say, that we must needs dy one day, for to reuiue eternally in the accomplishment of all the felicities of Heauen.

Alexander hath no greater a treasure, then that of his hopes. The ayme or scope of his Fortune was alwayes vpon the future; and what goods soeuer he possessed, he euery day yet attended for more, as if he had some intelligence with Chance, to receiue from its prodigall hand, all the effects of his desires. The merchants, that go in pursuite of riches vpon the Ocean, liue not but of the hope of their mercinary cõquest. How miserable soeuer they find themselues, on the way of their nauigation, they so mainly for-

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get themselues, in the sweet thoughts of their expectation, as they thinke themselues the richest of the world; and they wil sooner be looſing their lyfe, in the midst of the rockes, then the beliefe they haue thereof. So much their imaginary hope seemes to carry them away.

Let vs say then, more boldly, and with more reason, that such as termine all their hopes to the Eternity, as to the onely obiect, which is able to quench the thirst of our soules, still increasing more and more, may be sayd before hand, to be the richest of the Earth. For their hope, is not that of *Alexander*, whose vowes were addressed to *Fortune*; & much lesse, that other of those old Mariners, as changeable as the sea that guides them; but another quite different, that for foundation hath but Vertue, and in the hope of possessing one day the treasures of Heauen, they take the paynes to purchase them, through the continuall meditation of Death, as the onely lesson that teacheth vs to liue well. They passe deliciously their tyme in the expectation of their last day on earth, and like to those merchants, stand counting all the houres of their voyage, with impatient desire to see out of hand, the very last of them, so to be alwayes perfectly happy.

happy. And howbeit this voyage be long, and troubleſome, yet they eſteeme theſelues ſo rich withall, as they would not change their hopes, for all the gold of the world.

In effect, we muſt needs confeſſe, that the only hope of glory, ioyned with vertues is the only good of life, for the atteyning one day, of the poſſeſſion of them; where a holy ſoule may find the full accompliſhmẽt of its deſires. But it is yet to be conſidered that this hope, and all theſe vertues can haue no ſurer foundation, then that of the continuall thoughtes of Death, ſince all our good doth abſolutely depend of this laſt houre, wherein the important ſentence of our life, or Death is to be ſignified vnto vs. Hence it is, that mã being holily rich, heapes vp good workes, during the courſe of his life, as diuine Treaſures, to enrich his ſoule with all the eternall felicities, which may accompliſh it with glory and contentment. He liues alwayes contẽt and rich at once, in this pleaſing thought (forſooth), that he will neuer ſeeme to dye, vntill ſuch tyme as he be quite dead. Whence it happens that he tramples vnderfoot very generouſly all ſorts of greatneſſes and riches, through the knowledge he hath of thoſe, which his ſpirit poſſeſſeth without euer being touched with other

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enuy, then to finiſh readily his voyage, to make exchange for Death, with a life exempt from Death. So as we may wel mainteyne, that he, who is alwaies thinking of Death, is the richeſt in the world; ſeeing that euen ſuch thoughts only, may make him to purchaſe the treaſure of Eternity, wherein conſiſts our ſoueraigne Good.

A Contemplation vpon the Tombe of Creſus.

CHAP. VIII.

YOV Rich-men of the world, who know no other God, then Gold and Siluer, come and ſee the treaſures, which the greateſt King of the Earth hath carryed with him, into the Tombe. And this is the mighty King *Creſus*, to whome the mines ſerued him for a Coffer the *Indyes* for a Cabinet, and the Ocean for a new riuer of *Pactolus*, where he vainely endeauoured to quench the thirſt of his guilty auarice, and of his moſt haughty ambition. Repreſent vnto your memory his paſſed greatneſſes, and behould now his preſent miſeries. If you thinke of the riches of his life

all

all of roſes, conſider the pouerty of his Death all of thornes. If you remember the magnificences of his Court, turne the leaſe at the ſame tyme, to ſee the horrours of this his diſmall ſolitude. If you muſe yet on the rich ornaments of his golden Pallace, ſee & contemplate through your teares, the corruptiõ which is incloſed with him in the Tombe. If you haue ſeene him ſeated on the higheſt top of greatneſſes, behold him now With the ſame eye abaſed on the dunghill of miſery: He hath liued, he hath reigned as an Idoll within the Temple of Fortune, on the proudeſt Altar of Vanity, but the torch of his life, is put out, the date of his reigne is expired, the Temple of his glory is demoliſhed, the Aultar of his Empire is deſtroyed, and this carkaſſe which you ſee, is the Idol that ſerues as a prey vnto the wormes.

Gobrias, do thou cauſe thy ſelfe, to be drawne heere by thy Lyons, on thy Chariot of maſſy Gold, before thou dyeſt. The deceiptfull glaſſes of thy goodly Mirrours, hide from thine eyes, the truth of thy defects, & let thee ſee, but the guilded caſe of thy rich apparences. On the other ſide, they but repreſent to thee by halfes, while this Sepulcher ſhal depaynt them forth to thee at large with the ſame draught, and with the ſelfe

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ſame lineaments, which Nature hath markt vpon thy body, from the moment of thy birth. In comming hither, to viſit this place thou ſhalt not ſtray awhit out of thy way, ſince euery moment of Tyme, directs thy ſteps vnto the Sepulcher. Enter a little into the knowledge of thy ſelfe, and reuert from thy wandering. Thou repoſeſt for the moſt, vpon a Couch all of gold: And what pleaſure takeſt thou the while, to paſſe ſome nights vpon this bed of Flowers, ſince thou muſt lodge ſo long a tyme, vpon a clod of earth, wherof thou art framed & moulded? thou takeſt al thy repaſts vpō a ſiluer Table, thou ſeeſt this carkaſſe, wherof thou art the originall, how it ſerues for a table & meate all at once for the wormes to feed on? Why doſt thou prize ſo much thy treaſures? Behould to what eſtate is he brought, who hath poſſeſſed all thoſe of the World. At his birth he had for portion, all the good of the earth. and in dying he hath inherited all the miſeries of nature. Imagine that which he hath had, and ſee what is left him. He hath purchaſed al, & yet poſſeſſeth nothing, nor canſt thou auoyd his lot, whileſt thou holdeſt the ſame way of his life: hence it is, that I point thee out thy ſepulcher all ready within his Tombe.

Policrates, come see the coffer of the Treasures of *Cresus*, to glut thy couetous appetite with all; his rotten bones I meane (whose marrow the wormes deuoure) the stench of this prey couered with a linnen sheet, newly weft together with the infection. Behold now all, which this mighty King was able to saue from the Shipwracke of his lyfe and riches altogether. These are the lamentable relickes, as well of his Maiesty, as of his greatnesses; and thou runst into danger of the same rockes, so sayling in a lyke sea, if thou change not the Pylot. Take profit then frõ the domage of another, & mayster thy brutish passions, that prepare for thine enemies, the triumph of thy lyfe.

And thou *Lucullus*, come and visit the Sepulcher of this great Prince, before thou vnpeoplest the ayre of birds, the land of sauage beasts, and the sea of fishes, if thou wilt see displayed the vanity of thy enterprises. Thou takest a glory, while thy life lasts, to afford entertainement to all the world: Behould awhile, how thou art like to be intreated after thy death. Cause thy tables to be furnished with meats, the most delicious that are, yet of necessity must all the company, serue one day as a last course for the wormes. Let thy festiuall dayes, hould out

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for a whole yeare together, the Sun which ſhines vpon thee, will not fayle to conduct al thy bãquetting gheſts into the Sepulcher; In ſuch ſort, as looke how the tyme deuoures it ſelfe, ſo likewiſe doeſt thou ſeeme to deuoure thy life by little and little, with the ſame food that doth nouriſh and mainteyne it. What reckoning cauſt thou make of al the glory of thy prodigious magnificences, if it haue no other foundation with it, then that of corruption? For al the proud preparations of thy Feaſts do metamorphoze themſelues into infection, with thy miſerable ſubiects, which haue cauſed the expence.

You mercinary Soules, who are not capable of loue but for your treaſures, nor of paſſion but to make you Idolaters of them, you ſtand counting your Crownes euery day, and you keep no account by order, of a wiſe foreſight of the ſmall tyme which is left you to enioy the ſame. To what end ſerues you your Booke of accompts, where you reckon vp the ſummes which are due vnto you; if you want vnderſtãding to calculate that which you owe to your conſcience, whoſe intereſts termine themſelues, eyther to your loſſe or ſafety? You vnbury the gould and ſiluer out of the earth, not conſidering the while, that you are going to occupy

occupy their place in the ſame earth. You buy with their money, the pleaſures of your lyfe, and you ſell thoſe of your death: for lyuing in delightes, you dye in torments. Know you not that whatſoeuer is on earth, is but Earth?

Wherefore tye you then your affections ſo to that, which you cannot loue without hating your ſelfe? what will you do, when you dye, with your treaſures? I doubt very much you wil leaue them to your children; but yet the crymes which you haue committed in procuring thē, ſhall ſtil be abiding with you: ſo as, to make your Heires paſſe deliciouſly this life, you ſhall looſe the eternal, which is promiſed vs. You damne your ſelues, for them, as you were not borne, but for others. Quit the world, before it quit you, & bid an eternall adieu to its vanityes. *Creſus* was all gould, as you are, and now is he all duſt. The flaſh of his riches, did dazle all the world, except *Solon*, who diſcouering his miſeries, in the mideſt of his greatneſſes, maintayned him to be poore with all his treaſure. Go you ſometymes, before your death, and imagine the houre which you breath in to be your laſt, and then conſult with the Oracle of your iudgement, for to know the good which you would

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haue done, before this cruell ſeparation of your ſelfe from your ſelfe. And after it ſhall haue taught you your duty, ſuffer not your ſelfe to be ouertaken by the ſundry diſaſters, which euery moment may be taking away your lyfe. Serue your ſelfe of your Riches, without glewing your affection to them. Since you are the mayſter of them, ſuffer them not to be your mayſter. You haue found them in the earth, and there let them reſt for you, nor let any one be ſetching thē forth. Wel may you be hiding them in your coffers, for a tyme, but the day of Death diſcouers all, & it is in your hands to make vp the laſt accompt, eyther of the profit, or domage, which they ſhall peraduenture haue cauſed to you. You might haue purchaſed Heauen with your almes; where it may be you haue rather bought eue Hell with your prodigalities. You might haue built Temples to the glory of him, who hath beſtowed them on you; & you haue offered them in ſacrifices, vpon the Aultar of your paſſions, to the Idols of your ſoules.

Will you neuer open your eyes to diſcouer the precipices, which encompaſſe you round? Will you be alwayes cruell to your ſelues, to the preferring of the maniſion of the earth, before that of heauen; the delights

of the world, before those of Eternity; and the vayne riches of heere beneath, before the treasures of the eternall glory? Imagine you that before you were borne you were nothing; that being borne, you haue but quickened a peece of corruption, whose life cōceales the infection, and whose Death bewrayes the same. Say now then you Rich men as *Cresus*, shall I terme you miserable with *Solon*, since Death takes all away from you, saue only the sorrow of hauing liued so ill a life?

That he who thinkes alwaies of Death, is the wisest of the world.

CHAP. IX.

VERITY is the obiect of all Sciences. And of all verityes there is none more knowne, nor is more sensible then that of our mortall condition, since we dye continually without cease. In so much as the best science of the world consists in the knowledge of ones self. The disasters and miseries that befal vs euery houre, are goodly schooles for vs to become learned. As for me, I hould, that the onely

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meditation of death, inſtructs vs in all that which is neceſſary for vs to know. Who doubtes, but that he who thinkes alwayes of his end, is a great Deuine; if all the goodly Maximes of this diuine ſcience, termine at the eternall life, which followes death? That he is a Philoſopher, we muſt needs belieue; for if Philoſophy learne vs the art of reaſoning, we can ſerue our ſelues of reaſon, no wayes better, then to be alwayes a thinking of death, and the contemp of lyfe. That he be an Aſtrologer, is a meere neceſſity, becauſe, throgh the mouing of his lyfe, he vnderſtands that ſame of the ſtars, which ſhine vpon him; imagining with himſelfe, that as he goes by litle and litle, to finiſh his courſe in the Tombe; ſo lykewiſe the Sun approches to the end of its lucid race, where it is to fynd at laſt its vtmoſt.

That he is a Mathematician, the reſemblances are too playne, ſince that according to the meaſure of the knowledge he hath of himſelfe, he can meaſure the height, depth, and breadth of all things, being of the ſame nature with him. That he ſhould be ignorāt of Arithmetick, it were not credible; for ſince he can tell how to compt all the moments of his life, he muſt needs be very skilfull in numbers. I ſhould thinke, he had skil in muſike

ſiketoo, ſince he puts his paſſions in accord, to charme his ſpirit with their ſweet harmony. He muſt of neceſſity be a great Phiſitian ſince he buſyes his ſoule ſo, in the chiefe health of his innocency, to attaine immortality, in muſing alwayes vpon Death. So as with reaſon might we hould him, to be the wiſeſt of the world: and the wiſeſt that are to authorize my ſaying, may well be glad to imitate him.

Ariſtotle, thou haſt ill imployed thy tyme to ſtand ſo much in diſcourſe of the world, without knowing the miſeries thereof. For if thou hadſt had the knowledge of them, why hadſt thou not followed the example of *Alexander*, in ſeeking forth a new one, not for to conquer it, as he, but for to liue in, eternally happy? And as his valour had put the conceipt into his head, ſo might thy ſpirit haue giuen thee the ſame proiect. It is playne therefore, thou haſt ſpoken of the Earth with the language of heauen, and of heauen with the language of the earth. Thou haſt made an Anatomy of nature, diſcourſing with iudgemēt, of all the ſecond cauſes which do make the ſprings of the whole to moue. Thou haſt gyuen the definition of al things, but only of thy ſelf; as if thou couldſt not haue remembred them all, but with forgetting

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forgetting thy selfe. Thou wast busyed much in counting the nũber of the heauens, without assigning thy place there put aloft. Thou hast noted the diuers motions of the Sunne; thou hast spoken of it's Eclypses, without once informing thy selfe of the cause, which hath giuen it the being, and light.

Thou hast discourst very aptly of the reuolution of ages, and of the continuall vicissitude of tyme; without taking any heed to the perpetuall inconstancy of thy life. Thou hast maintayned, that whatsoeuer subsists in the world, runnes post to it's ruine; and yet, as if thou perceiuedst not thy self to runne a whit towards the Tõbe with the rest of created things, thou hast spoken not a word of this second life, wherein abides the perfection of all our happines. Thou hast yielded the Sunne to be eclypsed. Thou hast afforded the Moone to take diuers coũtenãces vpon her. Thou hast giuen leaue to Serpents to be changing their skin, and to the *Phenix* to reuiue of it's ashes; and cruell to thy selfe the while, thou hast taken away the hope from thee of euer arising againe. Thy spirit hath beene like to a torch, which consumes it selfe to giue others light. For thou laboureſt to discouer to men all the goodlyest

goodlyeſt ſecrets of nature; and haſt voluntarily hidden from thy ſelfe, the ſecrets of thine owne ſaluation. Thou haſt lent *Ariadnes* threed to an infinite number of ſpirits who were intangled in the labyrinth of the world, without once being able, to get forth thy ſelfe, though the knowledge of its cauſes and effects: & thou haſt euen damned thy ſelfe. Fooles, ſpeake not but of thy Prudence, and wiſe men of thy Folly. It had beene a great deale better for thee, thou hadſt poſſeſt all the Vertues, then to ſpeake ſo of them, without them, & in their abſence. Thou madſt profeſſion to teach mē the language of reaſon, and thou haſt neuer beene ſpeaking with thy ſelfe thereof, therby to bring thee, into the contempt of the earth and deſire of heauen. Thy light hath dazeled thee, thine armes haue vanquiſhed thee, & the greatnes of thy Spirit hath made thee miſerable. For with endeauouring to merit Crownes, thou haſt rayſed thy ſelfe aboue all the Empires of the world, to make thy ſelfe to be adored; & that thy Example might ſerue as a law vnto others, thou haſt beene the firſt Idolatour of thy ſelfe,

Thou wouldſt not beleiue that there was one God in heauen, becauſe thou ſaidſt thy ſelf to be a God on earth. Thou wouldſt not

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not ſpeake of the other lyfe, as knowing wel, that he who diſtributes the good, & the euill to ech one, ſhould ſeeme to prepare there a Hell for thee to puniſh thy arrogãcy. So as if it were once affoarded thee, to re-begin thy courſe againe, thou wouldſt doubtles forget the vanity of all thy learning, to be thinking continually of Death, whiles theſe only thoughts do learne vs all manner of ſciences. The glory which is left thee, for hauing ſpoken of the world, is ſhut vp in the world, and though it ſhould laſt as long as it, yet ſhall it alwayes dye with it. Thy reputation is reuereneed on earth, and thou art trod on vnder foot in Hell. Men do honour thy name, and the deuils torment thy ſoule. Behold all the recompence of thy trauailes. Let vs ſay boldly then, that he who is alwayes thinking of Death is ignorant of nothing; and that, for to be eſteemed wiſe, he ſhould liue with his thoughts, as the only obiect of the glory we hope for, and of the felicity we attend euery houre.

Plato, to what purpoſe ſerues thee, that faire Renowne, which thou haſt cauſed to ſuruiue thy aſhes? They ſpeake euery one of thee, but if they fetch any argument of thy wiſedome, they conclude vpon thy folly, while Death diſhonours thy lyfe. We may

may compare thee to *Hannibal*; for after he had triumphed ouer others, he let himselfe be vanquished by himselfe, hauing receyued a law from his passions, & a seruitude from his vices. In lyke māner may we say of thee, that thou hadst couragiously triumphed ouer all thy popular errours, which are thy chiefe domesticke enemies: after, I say, thou hadst left thy goodly actions, for so many examples of morall vertues; thou buryedst the richest Crowne, within thy Sepulcher, and that which surmounts all tyme, and the inconstancy thereof: for at thy Death, thou adoredst many Gods, as repenting thee of the opinions, yea of the beliefe thou hadst in the course of thy lyfe.

Thou tookest a great deale of paynes to procure the surname of *Deuine*, through thy diuine thoughtes; but in the highest of thy soaring pitch, thy spirit, as an illegitimate yong Eagle, not being able to endure the splendour of the sun of faith, was cast down headlong from the top of the heauens to the lowest of the earth, where dying alwayes in punishments, and reuiuing euery momēt in their dolours, it shall liue for euer in eternall paynes. Let vs say then agayne once more, that all sciences are but meere vanity, except such as teach vs to liue well, and dy hap-

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happily. And that after this manner, who thinkes continually of Death, is the wiſeſt of the world.

A Contemplation vpon the Tombe of Salomon.

CHAP. X.

RETVRNE yet once agayne O great Queene of *Saba*, to behold this wiſe *Salomon*, & come attended with your magnificent trayne, thateuen the ſelfe ſame ſubiects, who were the witneſſes of your ioy, may be the ſame likewiſe of your ſadnes, in this cruell change, both of tyme & fortune. You haue paſſed through many a ſea, and happily beene quit of a thouſand dangers on the land, for to viſit this great Monarke, as the onely Abridgement of the wonders of the world. Put your ſelfe once more into the perils of the ſame rockes, and into a new danger of ſo long a voyage, to ſee theſetting of this Sun, the aſhes of this Phenix; I would ſay the Tombe, and corruption of this incomparable, of this inimitable, of this mighty King of Sages.

What metamorphoſis? The ſplendour of his

his Riches, had once dazeled your eyes, & now the horrour of his pouerty, doth begg euen teares of your compassion. Heeretofore you cõtemplated his power with astonishment; and now see into what plight of feeblenes haue miseries brought him. You admired the greatnes of his Empire, & that likewise of his spirit, ioyned with the perfection of his wisedome; but now consider how all these goodly qualityes haue not beene able, to exempt him from the Sepulcher, where he serues as a prey vnto the worms. You haue adored him on the Theater of his Vanities at such tyme as he represented the personage of the greatest King that euer wore a Crowne; and turning the leafe, within the twinckling of an eye, is this very King, no more then a loathsome carkasse, whome horrour & amazement hold in pledge, vntill such tyme, as he be conuerted into dust; which he hath beene indeed, but that is all. And hardly dare we now maintaine him to be he, since that in seeking him out, within himselfe, is he not to be found: *So vanisheth the glory of the world, all flyes into the Tombe.*

Solon, since thou hast borne the surname of all the seauen Sages of *Greece*, come & visit this tombe, of the wisest of the world, of

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this incomparable *Salomon*. He was great of birth, great in happines, great in power, great in riches, & most great in knowledge; But behold now, how his rich cradle is chāged into this poore Sepulcher; How his felicity, hath taken the visage of misfortune; How his power is bounded in the impotēcy thou seest him in. He is not great but in miseries, he is not rich but in wormes, and in the knowledge of the follies which he hath wrought. Among so many goodly lawes which thou hast gyuen to the *Athenians*, remember thy selfe of that, which nature hath imposed vpon thee, to dy at all howers, vntil such tyme, as thou be quite dead. Thou dost in vayne command thy bones to be cast into diuers places after thy Death; for if they putrify not all at once, ech one of thē shall produce a stench from the marrow, in the place, where it shalbe buryed. Thou must necessarily follow the lot of this great Sage, since you are brothers both of the same condition. Thou hast taught others long inough; learne thou that, which as yet thou knowest not. Thou teachest all the world to liue; learne thou thy selfe to dy well. Thy knowledge is but vanity. For though thy precepts be engrauen in marble and brasse, time which deuoures all things, shall deface the

the remembrance of them, to ſo bury thy glory. If thou lyueſt not for thy ſoule, rather then thy body, they will ſcarce belieue thou haſt lyued at all.

Periander, come & behould thy Companion of renowne, ſo as if thou knoweſt him not, in the eſtate he is brought into, touch but thy owne miſeries with thy finger, and thou ſhalt playnly diſcouer on their face, all the draughts of his reſemblãce. He hath been King as wel as thou, as good, as wiſe. And if thou bearſt the Surname of *Tyrant* aboue him and that he hath not beene a Tyrant of his people; yet the vanities of his life haue beene ſo. He is dead howſoeuer; and at the very ſame tyme, wherein truly thou behold'ſt his putrified bones, the fire of thy life hath brought thee by little and little, into aſhes, neere vnto his aſhes. If thou traceſt the ſame way with him, thou ſhalt put the truth of thy ſaluation into doubt. I would haue thee be a Tyrant alſo, but that only againſt thy ſelfe, to be cruell to thy paſſions, nor euer to pardon thy faults; otherwiſe reaſon ſhall be depriuing thee of the Surname of a Sage, which thy folly hath giuen thee.

Pittacus, be thou a partner likewiſe, to behold the miſeries of thy like, and if thou wilt learne thy good ſpirit wiſedome, em-

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ploy thy reaſon, and eloquence to chaſe away vices from thy country, rather then the Tirant though thy force and courage. Thou ſayeſt, we ought to foreſee the accidents afarre of, which may happen to vs, for to be able to ſuffer them, with the more conſtancy, when they light: why thinkſt thou not then, alwayes of this accident, inſeparable from Death, which purſues vs neerer then a ſhadow the body; not for the ſuffering of the paynes with the greater conſtancy, but rather with more profit, that Death might make thee a ſucceſſour of a more happy life? Behould in this tombe, the image of all thy errours. See wherein conſiſts the glory of the world, and this vayne renowne, wherof thou becõmeſt an idolater. If this great Sage haue beene ſo taxed, how ſhalt thou be able to auoyd the blame and ſhame at once? I leaue thee to thinke and meditate vpon it.

Bias, come and behould through curioſity the aſhes of the wiſeſt of the world, to iudge whether there be any difference betweene them, and thoſe of the moſt fooles. I know well, that the horrour of the tombe will not aſtoniſh thee a whit, ſince thou haſt ſeene thy country ſackt already with a dry eye, and thy children dead before thee. But in theſe actions it is not, where thou art to

make

make the force of thy ſpirit to appeare. After thou hadſt loſt all, thou oughtſt to haue ſaued thy ſelfe to be rich for euer. Thou belieueſt, thy vertue ſhould appeare, with ſaying, that thou carryeſt all thou haſt about thee, and hadſt ſaued all thy goods from the fire of thy towne, wherein thou miſtakeſt thy ſelfe. For thou wert puffed greatly with thy vanity, and charged with the weighty burden of thy vayne ſciences. Thou knoweſt all that, which we ought to be ignorant of, to become well skilled in the knowledge of true vertue indeed.

And to let thee ſay playnely thine owne folly, ſo it is, that the precepts of thy wiſedome haue neuer yet ſaued any one of thoſe that obſerued the ſame. Thou preacheſt vertue, and adoreſt but a falſe image therof; wiſedome conſiſts not but in alwayes thinking of death; and thou haſt nothing more deare, then lyfe in the blindneſſe, wherein thou art. Misfortune robs thee euery houre of a part of thy ſelf, through continuall loſſe of that, which thou loueſt moſt, and thou art inſenſible of all theſe attempts. But heerin thou letſt thy vanity appeare, rather then any vertue at all, ſince thou referreſt not the effects of thy patience to the abſolute cauſe,

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which giues thee grace thereunto. Thou Enemy to thy ſelfe, thou pulleſt the wings of thy ſpirit, that it may not fly aboue thy nature to know the Authour thereof. Conſider the glory that ſhall reſt, and be left for thee. The ſtone of this tombe which thou ſeeſt ſhall wayte vpon thy fleſh to couer it with all, in corruption and infection; and if thou will be reputed wiſe, thinke continually vpon this veriry.

Thales, thou muſt be a party lykewiſe, for to come and ſee, the mayſter of the Sages, in this poore little lodging, which nature hath prepared him from his birth. He hath beene farre more wiſe then thou, but yet with all his knowledge, he hath hardly byn able to fynd the way of his ſaluation. He knew ſo perfectly, the effects of all the ſeconde cauſes, as he forgot oftentymes to yield due homage vnto the firſt and ſoueraygne cauſe, onely adorable. Take thou thy profit then, from the exãple of his loſſe. Thou ſtudyeſt vaynly to marke the courſes of tyme, conſider rather, how it pulls thee by litle and litle into the Sepulcher.

Why breakeſt thou thy braynes, to know from whence the winds proceed, ſince thou oughtſt to feare that of vanity, for it threatnes thee with ſhipwracke? Thou

further noteſt ſundry motions of the ſtarres, it ſufficeth thee, that that of the Sea be fauorable to thee, to ſhun the rockes of that other of the world, wherto nature hath made thee to embarke thy ſelfe. Thou makeſt leſſons to thy ſchollers vpon thunder, it is but a very curiolity of thine; thou ſhouldeſt not ſecke for ſhelters, but for the thunders of diuine Iuſtice, which ſhal ſhortly puniſh thee for thy fooliſh errours. If thou wilt be wiſe indeed, forget thou all what thou knoweſt, nor do thou euer remember but this verity, that thou art of Earth, and ſoone ſhalt thou return into Earth agayne, as this great King whoſe aſhes thou beholdeſt, enuironed with horrour and infection. Go now, and make a leſſon to thy ſchollers, of that which thou haſt ſeene, and then ſhalt thou deſerue the ſurname of a Sage.

Chilon, ſtep thou a little, out of thy way, to come and ſee the ruines of this *Coloſſus* heere of Greatneſſe, whoſe vnmeaſurable height aſtoniſhed all the world. This is the King *Solomon*, the wonder of all the Monarkes of the earth. Demaũd of him now what he hath done with his crowne, with his Scepter, with his Treaſures, with his Courtiers, with his ſlaues, and where now his pleaſures are. And if he anſwere thee not

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a word, make the ſame demaunds of thine owne ſpirit, and it ſhall anſwere for him, that all is vaniſhed like ſmoke, that all is ſlid away like waues, that all is rouled thence like a torrẽt, that al is melt away like ſnow; & that al theſe ſhadowes haue purſued their bodyes, into the ruine where thou ſeeſt it. Thou oughtſt to haue engraued this precept which thou gaueſt forth of *Noſce teipſum*, on thy hart rather, then on the Temple of *Apollo*. For this knowledge is not compatible with thine errours. Thou haſt giuen forth this ſecond Precept, *Of neuer coueting too much*, wherein truly, thou art not culpable at all, ſince thou deſiredſt not inough. Thou aſſigneſt all thy pretenſions on the earth, as if thou wert borne but for it; it ſeemes the Sunne neuer riſes, but to conuince thee of ingratitude, ſince for the goodnes of its effects, thou neuer didſt homage to the cauſe from whence hath it receiued the being and the light it hath. If it had as many tongues as beames, it would haue publiſhed at once, both his glory, and thy forgetfulnes. Confeſſe then the errour of it, if thou wouldſt haue men iuſtly to attribute wiſedome to thee.

Ceobulus, come thou in thy turne lykewiſe, to viſit the King of Sages, not in his

Pallace,

Pallace, but in the litle houſe, which the harbingers of death haue appointed for him. Thou beſtoweſt thy tyme but ill; for thou ſhouldeſt be making of verſes, and thou art full of them thy ſelfe, to wit, of wormes. So as if thou loue thy Poeſy ſo mũch, make verſes on thy wormes, deſcribe thy miſeries, and neuer ſpeake but of thy misfortunes; otherwiſe, ſhalt thou looſe the Surname thou haſt of a Sage. Thou ſeeſt well how the ſcience thou profeſſeſt, teacheth not but vanity, & how all the world is the great maiſter of it. True wiſedome conſiſts in poſſeſſing all the vertues, and thou yet liueſt in the hope of atteyning the firſt, which is to know ones ſelfe. *Salomon* was wiſer then thou art, and yet with all his knowledge, and wiſedome both, was he taxed of folly. He hath beene the greateſt of the world, & this little trench which thou ſeeſt conteyneth all his greatneſſes. The lands of his Empire are compriſed within this litle hillocke of earth, whereinto he is reduced: if thou wilt forgo thy vanity, behould ſomwhat neere, his miſeries, and thou ſhal learn all the Sciences of the world in the meditation of his nothing. You Sages of the world if you eſtabliſh the foundation of your glory on your prudence, all is but vanity. Be-,

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hold, contemplate, and publiſh freely the truth you know; I for my part will not learne other ſcience then that of liuing wel, ſince this is the ſcience of the Eternity, which hath for obiect an immortall glory.

A Contemplation vpon the Tombe of Helena.

CHAP. XI.

RETVRNE thou, O *Menalaus*, with thy Army, to the conqueſt of this fayre *Helena*, to triumph now at laſt vpon her vtmoſt ſpoyles. Imagine the Tombe wherein ſhe is encloſed, to be the the proud Troy, which deteynes her from thee. Marſhall thy Army about her Sepulcher, and let the valianteſt of thy ſoldiers, well armed againſt the horrour and affrightes of all the infections of the world, giue the firſt onſet to this fortreſſe of miſeryes. There is no need to reduce her into aſhes, ſince ſhe is wholy full of aſhes now. Encourage then thy Captains to the aſſaults. Thou haſt now, no more to deale with an infinite number of men, but rather with an infinite number of wormes, as owners, & poſſeſſors

poſſeſſors of the ſubiect of thy victory. But me thinkes ſome new *Achilles*, or ſome *Aiax* hath already demoliſhed the rampiers of this litle *Troy*, wherein thy *Helena* is captiued.

Approach then, braue *Menalaus*, with napkin at thy noſe, teares in thine eyes, ſighs in thy mouth, and plaintes in thy ſoule, to behold the Idoll of thy paſſions, and the obiect of the triumphes. *Behold this fayre Helena*, whome the greateſt Monarks of the world haue adored. *Behold this fayre Helena*, whome *Theſeus* tooke away, and *Paris* rauiſhed as a thrall of her perfections. *Behold this fayre Helena*, who hath peopled *Greece* with widdowes and Orphans. *Behold his fayre Helana*, who hath drowned a good part of the earth with a deluge of bloud. *Behold this fayre Helena*, the wonder of all the wonders in the world, the ſhame of ages paſt, the deſpayre of ſuch as are to come, & the miracle of her preſent age. *Behold this fayre Helena*, whome Paynters neuer durſt to repreſent, nor haue Poets beene able euer to prayſe inough. *Behold this fayre Helena*, whome no man hath admired but with Idolatry. *Behold this fayre Helena*, whoſe merits haue armed the one part of the world agaynſt the other, as if for her alone they would haue vtterly deſtroied

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the Vniuerse. *Behold at last this fayre Helena*, whose lyfe hath cost a million of deathes: behold this stinking carcasse which heere you see, this heape of putrifyed bones, and this lump of infection full of wormes.

Commaund thy imagination, to represent her vnto thee, in that estate she was in at such tyme as thou adoredst her on the Throne of her graces, for to acknowledge sensibly the differēce. Demand of her head, what is become of that fayre golden hayre of hers, so alwayes curled, where Loue had wrought a thousand Labyrinths, to make a thousand of the freest Soules to wāderin? Her hayre, I say, whose flash dazeled the eyes, and whose wreathes captiued harts? Where is that Alabaster brow, where Maiesties appeared in troupes, as alwaies ready to impose new lawes of respect to mortals? Where are her eyes, which you termed *The eyes of Loue*, since he had not beene blind, but for her sake? Or rather those two fayre starrs eclipsed, from whence thou receiuedst both the good and the euill influences of thy life? say we yet more, those two fayre Suns, arriued now at their last West, whose splendour euer blinded the whole world? What is become of them? we can hardly discerne the dreadfull ruines of their being. Where

may

may that godly feature be, whose flowers alwayes spread and disclosed, the winter reuereced much? Where is that mouth of Coral, whose voyce was an oracle of good & euill fortunes? Where is that necke of Iuory, that snowy bosome, and all the other parts of that body, where Nature had imployed the last endeauours of her power? I see nothing but wormes. I smell nothing but a stinke. All is vanished quite away. The flesh of that Maiesticall brow, lets her hydeous bones appeare. Those fayre eyes shew forth the holes, where the woimes haue built their Sepulcher. The flowers of this vilage are changed into thornes: and this mouth sometimes of Corall is now become a sinke of Infection. And for the rest of the parts of the body being al of the same nature with the whole, we may know the peece by the patterne.

Menalaus, behold the subiect of thy affection, of thy pleasures, of thy paynes, and of thy triumphes. Behold her, whome thou so deerely louedst, so highly reuerencedst & for whome thou hast a thousand tymes put thy Scepter, thy Crowne, yea all *Greece* in daunger, with thy life, and honour. Behold thy vanity discouered, consider thy shame, contemplate thy folly. This heape-

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ot Aſhes hath made thee to reduce into aſhes the proudeſt Citty of the world. This ſtinking Carkaſſe hath been conuinced in dying for putting a Million of men to death. This Coloſſus of miſeries, full of infection, hath changed the moſt flouriſhing Empire of the world into a meere dunghil. Muſter vp thine Army about this Sepulcher, that thy Captaynes and Souldiers may lament with thee thy folly, bewayling the tyme they haue imployed for the conqueſt of this heape of ſtinking earth. So as, if the Ghoſts, wherewith ſhe hath peopled Hell, were able to breake their priſons, they would bring a new warre vpon thee, as the partner of all the crymes, which they haue committed, in following thee.

I attend you, Dames, neere vnto this Tombe, to make the Anatomy of your beauties, of your ſweets, of your allurements, of your charmes, of your baites, of your wātoneſſe, and of all your vanities together. It is tyme for me to vnmask your Spirit, to let you manifeſtly ſee the truth of your miſeryes. You make a ſhew to all the world of your body, painted and waſhed euery day with the bathes of a thouſand diſtilled waters, and I will ſhew you the infection and putrefaction which is within. You ſay that a

woman

woman is then faire, when she hath a good body, with a handsome garbe, the haire flaxen and naturally curled, a soft skin, and as white as snow, a large and polished brow, the eyes blew or black, and pretty bigg, the chyn short and somewhat forked, & the rest of the parts of the body equally proportioned one to the other. But this is nothing yet. This goodly peece must needes be accompanyed with some Graces, to be quickened with Maiesty. Her flaxen and curled haire had need to be trimly dressed; her skyn how soft soeuer, should be nourished in water like a fish, for to cõserue it in its bewty & lustre. The brow had need be taught, to hide its pleights and wrinckles, to appeare alwayes most polite. Those fayre eyes must learne the art of charming harts; & to haue this secret iuduſtry with them, to wound in their sweetnes, and to kill in their choller. That little mouth of Roses should be alwayes sounding in the eares the sweetest harmony of eloquence, for to calme the harshest Spirits. In fine, ech part of the body is to learne its lesson of quaintnesse, and the spirit that animates the same to teach it euery day some vanity or other, and some new instructions to win loue withall, or rather folly, as if there were not fooles inough in the world.

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Beſides, this fayre peece had yet need to be decked vp with the richeſt habits that may be found, to giue lyfe to her grauity. This gallant hayre had need to be wreathed with chaynes of pearle, and diamonds, to allure the eyes more ſweetly in admiration of them, and harts vnto their loue. This delicate skin ſhould be heightened through the ſhaddow of a fly. This paynted viſage ſhould be daubed anew with a huge number of trumperyes, and inſtruments of vanity, be it in *Rebato's* of all faſhions, in *Pendants* for the eares of all colours, in *Carcanets* of diuers inuentiõs, & in *Veyles* of different ſtuffes. This body thus quickened with folly, rather then with reaſon, ſhould be euery day tricked vp with new habits, to the end, the eyes might not be ſo ſoone weary to cõtemplate the vanityes of them. In fine, ſhe ſhould haue a magnificent traine with her, of Horſes, Caroches, and Lakeys, to maintayne the greatneſſe of her houſe.

But let vs now breake the cruſt of theſe wily bayts, that blind our ſpirits ſo, and charme our reaſon, for to make vs run into our ouerthrow. This rich peece is but a fagot, or a bundle of putrifyed bones, of nerues; and of finewes full of infections, and whoſe Cemeter ſerues for a theater to let vs

ſee

ſee the miſeries of them. Thoſe frizled lockes are but the excrements of nature, engraffed in a ſoyle full of lice. That delicate skyn is but a pecce of parchment paſted vpõ bloud. Her frayle beauty, but that of flowers, ſubiect to the parching of the ſunne & the ſcorcching of fire: one dropp of the ſerene, and the onely alteration of the pulſe, and but one night of vnreſt only, are inough to ruine it quite. That large & polite Brow is not able to ſaue it ſelfe from the aſſaults of the wrinckes, which from moment to moment take vp the place, whatſoeuer reſiſtãce be made againſt them. Thoſe faire eyes are but as wateriſh holes, ſubiect to 60. ſeuerall maladies, all different; being ſo many miſchiefes diſpoſing to their ruine: a little Rheume makes them ſo ghaſtly, as they are conſtrayned to hide them, for feare they make vs not afraid. That Noſe and mouth are two ſincks of corruption, from whence infections iſſue at all moments. And for the reſt of the parts of her body, being all of the ſame ſtuffe, one may wel iudge of the whole peece by a patterne only.

On the other ſide, the action that animate this peece is but a breath of wind, which fils vp the ſayles of our Arrogancy in this ſea of the world, where vanity ſerues for Pilot, to

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hazard vs in the Shipwracke. Thoſe flaxen lockes in vayne are tricket ſo on the face, through an art of niceneſſe; the inuention is as guilty, as the matter frayle and contemptible. Let her waſh her delicate skyn day by day, the ſelfe ſame water that nouriſheth, doth putrify it no leſſe; for according as the ſleight therof makes her apparence to ſeeme yong anew, nature cauſeth the being to wax ould. That ſmooth Brow to no purpoſe hides its furrowes ſo, whiles Age diſcouers them by little and little. If thoſe eyes haue the skill to charme the harts, yet haue they not the tricke to charme their miſeries. I graunt that little mouth of Roſes, for a tyme may yield oracles of Eloquẽce; yet we muſt cõſider that as the words are formed of ayre, ſo into ayre agayne do they reſolue; their glory is but wind, and their harmony but ſmoake. In fine let the ſpirits which quickẽ theſe fayre bodyes, know all the leſſons of vanity and quaintneſſe that are, may it not be ſaid yet, that the art is blacke, and as pernicious as the inſtructions are.

As for the habits, which decke vp this rich Peece, they are but the workemanſhip of wormes, ſince they haue wrought the ſilke. Thoſe pearles & Diamonds ſo enchaſed in the hayre, are of the treaſures of the

Indies,

Indies, where the Riches of Vertue are vnknowne: but they are as ſo many ſubiects of contempt to holy Soules, who know that Heauen is not bought with the gold of the earth. And for all theſe toyes, that ſerue thus for ornaments to women, they are but as ſo many veyles, to ſhroud their defects with all, while they are ſo full of them. Let them ſhew themſelues as beautifull as they will, yet will I count more imperfections in their bodyes, then they haue hayres on their heads. They appeare not abroad till Noone, to ſhew that they employ one halfe of the day, for to hide the halfe of their miſeryes; and during the ſmall tyme they are ſeene abroade in, if we looke neere into all their actions, they giue forth a great deale more pitty then loue. One ſhalbe alwayes holding a napkin in her hand, for to voyed a part of the corruption which ſhe hath in her. Another ſhalbe forced in company to ſtep aſide vnto the chimney, to ſpit forth at her pleaſure, the infection ſhe holds in her breaſt. There ſhe ſhalbe houlding her muffe vpõ her cheeke ſwolne with Rheume for to couer the ill grace it hath. Heere will ſhe neuer pull of her gloues, for feare of diſcouering the itch of her hands.

Behold the leſſer defects of women,

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whiles of diſcretion, I conceale the greater, but I belieue in vayne, ſince all the world beholds thē wel inough; ſo as if they would yet ſee more ſenſible verityes of their miſerable condition, let them approach to this Tombe.

You Courtiers, I coniure you, by the power of thoſe Beauties, which you haue adored ſo much, to come hither and behould their ruine. What ſay I? nay horrour, infection and putrefaction rather. *Theſeus*, ſend thou hither thy ghoſt to this body, where thou hadſt lodged ſo long a tyme both thy hart and ſoule. Behold this faire *Helena*, whome thou hadſt ſtolne away with the perill of thy life, as idolatrous of her imaginary perfections. Search now in her, the baytes that charmed thee ſo, the charmes that raviſht thee, the bewty that made thee ſuch a thrall, and all thoſe ſweetneſſes which haue forged the chaynes of thy ſeruitude. Thoſe bayts now haue no more force, but to allure the wormes; thoſe charmes haue no more power, but to conſerue the infection; and thoſe bewties and ſweetneſſes changing the nature, do afford amazements, rather then any whit of Loue. But yet me thinks, thou art well reuenged. For this cruell Tyrant, who had reduced thee ſo by little and little

into

into aſhes, is euen now but aſhes her ſelfe. This mercyleſſe woman who would ſeeme to loue no man, is hated of all the world. This proud Dame, who made her ſelfe adored, ſerues as a victime to the wormes, and ſport to the winds. Yeſterday her bewty did pleaſe thee ſo much, as thou hadſt no eyes, but to admire her; & to day is her foulneſſe ſo hideous, as thou haſt no contempt but for her. Yeſterday thou ſighedſt for her loue, & to day the ſame hart euen ſighes for her miſeryes. Yeſterday her perfections did rauiſh thy ſoule, to make them adored; and to day her defects extort thy teares, and ſighes, to bewayle in their faſhion their ruine. Looke then, ſee heere that which thou haſt loued ſo much, and that which thou hateſt ſo mayneſly. See heere, what thou haſt admired with aſtoniſhment, & that which thou abhorreſt with ſo much reaſon; what cruell change is this from thy ſelfe, with thy ſelfe? or rather from the ſubiect of thy loue, with the ſame ſubiect it ſelfe? Shall I dare to ſay, that this ſtinking Carkaſſe heere is the fayre *Helena*? That this heape of rotten bones are the ſad ſpoyles of her perfectiõs? And that this little Aſhes, is the dolefull head of that wonder of the world?

Paris, Returne thou from Hell, into the

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earth agayne, for to see the cause of thy disastres. Approach to this Sepulcher, and contemplate the infection & corruption neere at hand, with thou hast adored vnder the name of *Helena*. How many tymes hast thou beene kneeling before this carkasse, & before these rotten bones? How many mischiefes hast thou run into? How many perils hast thou escaped? How many seas hast thou crossed ouer? How many euils hast thou suffered, for to possesse this heape of wormes? Thou verily beleiuedst, thou hadst all the riches of the world in thy ship, whiles thou hadst thy *Helena* therein. The Coffer is opē, behold now wherein consist thy treasures. Art thou not ashamed for hauing so made loue to this heape of Ashes? and for hauing sighed so, a thousand, & a thousand tymes after this stinking Earth? *Thus the glory of the world doth passe away, all flyes into the Tombe.*

Your Courtiers, come, yield you a last homage of visit, to this Idol of your passions. I haue heard indeed the *Persians* heertofore, haue adored the *Sun*, and that there haue beene other Paynims, who in their brutishnes haue adord likewise diuers sorts of beasts; but I haue neuer seene a more prodigious thing, then now at this day, while they adore euen Clay, Corruption, and Infection,

fection. There is nothing more certayne, then that in adoring women, they become Idolatours of their putrefaction; since their body is a sacke of worms. Behold the goodly subiect of your watchings, of your troubles, of your extrauagancies. How is it possible, this heape of ashes heere should affoard you such ill dayes, and so long nights? That this sinke of infection should make you shed so many teares, and send so many sighes into the wind? Are you not iealous, trow you, that the wormes should possesse this subiect of your affection? Can your wayward courages ere endure these wormes should be taking their Fees thereof in your presence, & to your scorne? For they glut themselues of the one part of what you haue adored, and for the other, they make a dunghill of it. These are no Fables, these. Looke, & smell your selues, all is but misery and stench. *So passeth the glory of the world away.*

I inuite you, my Dames, to a feast, which the corruption of *Helena's* body makes vnto the wormes, in the presence of Heauen & Earth. This Tombe which you see, is the Hall, where the banquet is prepared; come you hither in troupes, attyred all in the richest Ornaments you haue, as you would go vnto a wedding-feast. I licence you her-

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in, to bring a glaſſe with you hanging at your girdle, for to admire with an dolatrous eye, the good Graces you haue. And if you affoard any whir of intermiſſion at all, caſt but your eyes awhile, vpon this ſtinking carcaſſe heere, ſince it is the body of your ſhadow, and the originall of your liuing pourtraicts. You now ſee inough, that you are but aſhes, but earth, but clay, but meere putrefaction and infection; and yet ſuffer neuertheles your ſelues to called Goddeſſes; and to heape yet more cryme vpon crime, you accept the Sacrifices. I haue not ſeene, nor read of ſo prodigious Metamorphoſes, that euen very Clay ſhould be raiſed vpon a Throne, and the wormes and corruption ſhould be meriting of titles of immortall glory. You ſuffer them to be kneeling before you, and feare not the while, leaſt the wind of your vanities be carrying away the duſt, whereof you are framed. You walke vpon cloth of gold, and after your death, are the beaſts trampling vnder foote your ſtinking earth. You ſuffer them to kneele before you: Alas! what a ſight to humble ones ſelfe, before a dunghill! Decke vp, and adorne your carkaſſe as long as you pleaſe, the ſtench at laſt ſhall diſcouer the miſeries thereof, to the ſight of all the world. This hand-

handfull of aſhes, which you ſee heere, is the beautifull *Helena*, whoſe allurements charmed harts, and whoſe charmes did rauiſh ſoules. And yet notwithſtanding is there left no more of her, then the meere infection, which was bred with her.

I do euen laugh at all your vanities, my Dames, & mocke at thoſe who admire thē ſo. When as your bewties do aſſaile me, I breake the very cruſt of them, & approching to the corruption which is within, it makes me hate them more, then euer any man had loued them heretofore. I take pleaſure ſomtyme to behold your ſweetneſſes, your allurements, your nyceties; but it is only to be touched with compaſſion of your miſeries. For whatſoeuer is the fraileſt in the world, is not ſo frayle as your nature is; whatſoeuer is more variable heere beneath, is not ſo changeable as your being is. I dare hardly eye you any long tyme, for feare, leaſt euen while I looke vpon you, you vaniſh from my eyes, ſince you dye euery hower.

Flatter not your ſelues, my Dames, before your Glaſſe; your body is euen iuſt of the ſame nature, with the ſhaddow which you ſee therin. You are indeed nothing. But if you force me to ſay, you are ſomthing, you are a meere dunghill couered with ſnow, a

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ſinke of infection enuironed with flowers, a rich coffer full of wormes, and in a word, an abridgement of all the miſeryes of the world.

You Courtiers take a pride, forſooth, for hauing caryed away a thouſand Fauours trō the hands of Ladies, either through the force of your ſpirit, or thorugh the charms of your ſubtilties. One bragges for hauing enthralled a Lady with the chaynes of her owne hayre. Another for inueagling a new Miſtreſſe in his loue, through letters written with his owne hād. There, one more perfect thē the reſt ſhalbe publiſhing his triumphes. Heere another more happy yet, ſhal auouch al his paſſiōs to haue beene crowned. There ſhal not faile ſome one that wilbe ordinarily buſiyng his ſpirit with theſe vaine thoughts that he was euen borne into the world, to tempt the pudicity of Ladyes, ſo louely he is. But let vs pul the wings of this proud one, & make theſe bodyes of earth to walke vpon the earth, who rayſe their Spirits vpon Thrones of ſmoke, belieuing they do well.

Thou, that vaunteſt thy ſelfe for enthralling thy miſtreſſe with her owne chaynes; what glory it is, whiles the hayre, which ſo charily thou keepeſt within a box of muske, are but the rootes of lice, which ſhall putrify

in ſight, and thou ſhalt ſent them anone, in deſpight of al thy powders & perfumes. So as if thou wilt needs haue me call thoſe wreathes of excremẽts, ſo full of infection, by the name of chaynes, they are euen the chaynes which the Deuill put into thy hands, to help thee to draw that body, which thou haſt idolatrized into Hel; but takeſt not heed the while, that in drawing it thither, they draw thee; and haling it thither, they hale thee alſo. Behould a trimme peece of Glory to be proud off.

Thou that haſt yet more ſecret tyes of Friendſhip, with a Lady, written with her hand, and with her bloud; if thou thinkſt ſo, thou art rich indeed, if thy treaſure conſiſt in a peece of paper, beſpotted ouer, & blurred with blacke or red: yet to heare thee ſpeake of this fauour of hers, they would verily ſay, thou poſſeſſedſt the Empire of the world. An intolerable vanity the while. For admit that all the fayreſt Ladies of the world had ſigned to thee with their guilty and corrupt bloud, that they loued thee perfectly indeed, on which ſide wouldeſt thou find thy glory in theſe aſſurances? In ſo promiſing their loue to thee, they but promiſe thee to get thee damned, ſince a loue ſo vnlawfull as that, leades ſoules into Hell. And doſt

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And doſt thou make any reckoning of theſe promiſes then, poore ſoule? All the teſtimonyes of their paſſions do witnes thy folly agaynſt thy ſelfe; and takeſt thou pleaſure to blind thy ſelfe, with their hood, not to ſee the precipices that beſet thee round? Thou imagineſt it ſtrayght to be a great honour to be fauoured of Ladyes: repreſent to thy ſelfe, what a glory it were, for thee, that a peece of Clay being quickened with lyfe, ſhould ſeeme to be beloued of a Dunghill. Whiles thou becommeſt thus an Idolatour of a beautifull body, thou euen adoreſt the wormes, the infection and corruption it ſelfe, wherewith it is ſtuffed. What a crime is this?

And thou Companion of vanity, and folly at once, that ſo vaunteſt thy ſelfe to haue diſpeopled the earth of Myrrhes to crowne thy amourous triumphes withall, tell me what is become of this glory, and of this contentment, which thou ſeemeſt to exalt ſo much? I graunt, thou haſt trampled on flowers: But where art thou now? If therein thou haſt found the way of roſes, thou ſhalt enter anone into that of Thornes. For this is the order and courſe of things in the world, that Pleaſure begets Sorrow. Eyther thy delighs are paſt, or

preſent:

preſent: if paſt, thou art already in the Hell of their priuation; if preſent, thou art lykewiſe in another Hell of their cryme, and of the apprehenſion to looſe them. In ſo much as which way ſoeuer thou admireſt thy fortune, if it be a body, misfortune is the ſhadow. What glory doeſt thou thinke thou haſt gotten by the victory of thy guilty enterpriſes? Thou haſt peopled Hell with an infinite number of ſoules. Are not theſe very glorious actions trow you? Thou haſt lent thy cunning to the euill ſpirits, to deceyue thy neyghbours, as if he were not deceaued inough with his owne deceypts; and yet ſtill thou braggſt thereof, thereby to heape cryme vpon cryme.

I ſummon you, Courtiers, to appeare in thought and imagination, vpon the thorny bed, where you ſhall caſt forth to the winds this breath of life, and to repreſent withal to your ſelf before hand once a day the horrour & amazement you ſhall then haue of your ſelfe, when you ſhalbe calling to mind, the leſſons of the vanity and folly, which you haue giuen to an infinite number of feeble ſpirits, whoſe companions in loſſe you haue euer beene. Put off the tyme to this laſt hower, to make your accompt of the fauours which you haue euer receiued from Ladyes.

if

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if you wil know the true price of them. Thē euen then it is, when you ſhall feele very liuely, the aſſaults of your guilty conſciēce; the cruſt of your pleaſures ſhalbe broken, & you ſhall playnely ſee, what lyes within. Your ſpirit vnmasked of the veyle of your paſſions, ſhall ſenſibly diſcerne the truth of its paſſed offences, but there is no more returne to be had vnto life, to do pennance in, for them. You muſt go further thē ſorrows. What ſorrow ſoeuer I am able to expreſſe, is no part of that which you ſhall ſuffer. All torments whatſoeuer being ioyned together haue not gal inough to comprehēd the leaſt part of the bitternes of that cruell Adieu, which is then to be made to the world. Thē it is, I ſay, that you ſhall ſigh, but not of loue. Then it is, that you ſhall play the extaſyed and dead perſon, not in preſence of your Miſtreſſe, but before your crucified Iudge. Your tongue ſo eloquent before, ſhalbe then ſtruck dumbe, in puniſhment of your too much ſpeach. So as of force, ſhall you court Death in your faſhion, and according to the ſad humour which ſhall then poſſeſſe you. You muſt of neceſſity be playing your part in this laſt momēt vpon the theater of your bed. I would be loath for my part to trouble the Reader, with the faces which you ſhall

make: it ſufficeth that you imagine the one part, and that you doubt not of the reſt. Thinke thē of death, you Courtiers, ſince the Eternity both of glory & payne, depends of a moment. *O ſweet, and dreadfull moment!*

And you, my Dames, you belieue you haue conquered an Empire ſtraight, as ſoone as you haue once ſubiected any ſpirit to you power: to what end do you ſtudy ſo, euery day, ſince you learne ech moment but vanity, and new leſſons of nicenes, be it for actiō or grace ſake; but therein what thinke you to do? Your purpoſe is to wound harts, & you vndoe ſoules; for when you make a mā paſſionately in loue with you, you do euen make him a Foole. You cannot be taking away his hart, without depriuing him of reaſon. And to what extrauagancies is he not ſubiect the while, during the reigne of his paſſion, I would ſay, of his folly? You are al which he loues, and very often all which he adores; what cry me? I ſhould thinke it rather to pleaſe you, then to ſaue himſelfe! If he looke vpon the Sun, he is but to make compariſon betweene the light of your eyes and that of this bewtifull ſtarre, which I leaue to you to imagine how farre frō truth. He ſeemes to maynteyne very impudently, in ſcorne of all created things, that you are

the

the only wonder of the world, and the very abridgemēt of al that nature hath euer made bewtifull; which yet no man belieues but he, and you. If he carry vp his thoughtes to Heauen, he compares you to the Angells, with theſe words, *That you haue all the qualities of them.* Iudge now without paſſiō, whether theſe termes of Idolatry do not fully, & wholy paſſe ſentence, to conuince him with a thouſand ſorts of crymes. And yet do you take pleaſure to make the Deuill more potent then he is, for to cauſe others to be damned.

Returne then agayne vnto your ſelfe, and conſider how you ought to render an accoumpt one day of all thoſe ſpirits, whoſe Reaſon you haue made to wander in the labyrinth of your charmes. For ſhe that on earth, ſhall haue ſubiected the moſt, ſhalbe the greateſt ſlaue in Hell. What glory take you to ioyne your charmes with thoſe of the Diuels, thereby to draw both bodyes and ſoules vnto them? I attend you at this laſt moment of your lyfe where your definitiue ſentence is to be pronounced. Thinke you alwayes of this moment, if there be yet remayning in you, bnt nener ſo litle ſparke of loue for your ſelues. When you ſhall once haue enthralled all the

Kings

Kings of the earth; there would yet be a great deale more ſhame, then honour in it, ſince all thoſe Kings were no more then meere corruption and infection. Thinke of your ſelues, my Dames, you are to day no more the ſame you were yeſterday. Tyme which deuours all thinges, defaceth ech moment the fayreſt lineaments of your face, nor ſhall it euer ceaſe to ruine your beauties, vntill ſuch tyme as you be wholy reduced to aſhes. *So paſſeth away the glory of the world, all flyes into the Tombe.*

That of all the Lawes, which Nature hath impoſed vpon vs, that ſame of Dying *is the ſweeteſt.*

CHAP. XII.

FROM the tyme that our firſt Father had violated the ſacred Lawes, which God had impoſed vpon him; Nature, as altering her nature, would acknowledge him no more for her child. Anone ſhe rayſeth a tumult againſt him, with all created things. The Heauen armes it ſelfe

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with thunders to punish his arrogancy. The Sunne hides himselfe vnder the veyle of his Eclypses, to depriue him of his light. The Moone his sister, defending his quarrell, resolues with her selfe to be often changing her countenance, towards him, to signify vnto him the displeasure she tooke thereat. The Starres being otherwise innocent of nature, became malignant of a sudden, to powre on his head their naughty influences. The Ayre keeping intelligence with the Earth, exhales her vapours, and hauing changed them into poyson, infects therewith the body of that miserable wretch. The Birdes take part with them, they whet their beakes, & clawes to giue some assault or other. The Earth prepares the mine of its abysses, for to swallow him vp, if the dread & horrour of its trembling, were not sufficient to take away his life. The sauage beasts stand grinding their teeth to deuoure him. The Sea makes an heape of an infinite number of rockes to engulfe him in their waues. But this is nothing yet; Nature is so set on reuenge against him, as she puts on his fellowes to destroy their pourtraite, I meane to combat with the shadow of their body, in causing them to quench the fire of their rage, with their proper bloud. In so much as man hath

no

no greater enemy then man himselfe. Let vs go forward.

To continue these euils, do miseries, enter into the world, accompanyed with their sad disastres, and followed with despayre, griefe, sadnes, folly, rage, and a thousand passions besides, which do cleane vnto the senses, for to seize vpon soules. This poore *Adam* sees himselfe to be besieged on al sidess if he looke vp to Heauen, the flash of the lightenings there euen dazles and astonishes him quite; the dreadfull noyse of thunder makes him to wish himselfe to be deafe; he knowes not what to resolue vpon, since he hath now as many enemyes as he had vassals before. *Adam* may well cry mercy for his syn; what pardon soeuer he obteyne thereof, yet will nature neuer seeme to pardon him for it. Whence it is, that in compasse also of these ages of redemption it self, wherein we breath the ayre of grace, we do sigh that same of miseryes. So as if there be nothing more certayne, according to the experience of our sense, then that the Earth is a Galley, wherein we are slaues; that it is the prison, wherin we are enchained, and the place assigned vs to suffer the paynes of our crymes in; can there possibly be found any soules so cuell to themselues, and such

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enemyes to their owne repoſe, as not to be continually ſighing after their liberty, after the end of their puniſhments, and the beginning of an eternall lyfe full of pleaſures? What would become of vs, if our lyfe endured for euer, with its miſeryes? if it ſhould neuer haue an end with our euills? & that it had no bounds, or limits, no more then we? For then ſhould I be condemning the laughter of *Democritus*, and allowing of the continuall teares of his companion, ſince the ſeaſon would be alwayes, to be alwaies weeping and neuer to laugh. Then would it be, that cryes and plaints would ſerue vs for paſtimes, and teares & ſighes, ſhould neuer abandon eyther our eyes, or harts.

But we are not ſo brought to this extremity of vnhappines; The Heauens being touched with compaſſion of our euills, and of the greatnes of our miſeryes, in giuing vs a cradle for them to be borne in, haue afoarded vs a Sepulcher alſo for to bury them in. *O happy Tombe*, that reduceth to aſhes the ſubiect of our flames! *O happy Tombe*, where the wormes make an end to deuoure the reſt of our miſeryes! *O happy Tombe*, where our ſoules do recouer their liberty, & where our bodyes do fynd the end, and terme of of paynes! *O happy Tombe*, where we are reduced

duced to corruption, to ariſe in glory! *O happy Tombe*, where death euen dyes with vs, and where lyfe reuiues with our ſelues for an Eternity! *O happy Tombe*, where we render to the earth, the earth of our body, to put our ſoules in poſſeſſion of the inheritance of heauen! *O happy Tombe*, where we paſſe from death, to lyfe; from ſadnes, to ioy; from infamy, to glory; from payne, to repoſe; and from this vale of teares, vnto the manſion of delights.

From the tyme that the children of *Iſrael* had taſted in the deſart the ſweetnes of the heauenly *Manna*; the moſt delicious meates of the earth, were growne to be contemptible to them; their harts euen chãging their nature, fell inceſſantly gaping after this celeſtiall food. So likewiſe may I ſay, that from the inſtant, wherein a holy Soule is once fed with the food of the grace which is found in an innocent lyfe; the world is an obiect of horrour and amazement vnto it; its thoughts & deſires creep not on the earth any more; if it ſigh, it is but after its laſt ſigh; if it complayne, it is only for the long terme of its baniſhmẽt in this vale of miſeryes. The hope of dying ſerues it as a cõfort in its troubles, and ſolace in its paynes; it lyues in the priſon of its body, as ſlaues in the priſon of

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their crimes, with a neceſſary conſtancy, alwayes attending on the laſt houre therof, and this laſt moment where begins the eternity of glory.

Me thinkes the ſentence of death, which the diuine iuſtice pronounced once to our firſt Parents, in that earthly Paradiſe, was much in their fauour, agaynſt the euills, wherewith their lyfe was fraught. For if God had made the ſame to be immortall with all miſchifes which ſucceeded their offence, of all created things had man beene found to be the miſerableſt of them, and moſt worthy of compaſſion; but the ſame Goodnes, which moued the Creatour to effect this goodly worke, did euen moue him likewiſe to conſerue the ſame. His ſentence was of death, but in the rigour of his iuſtice, he let his merry to appeare at the ſame tyme, ſince from the payne of death we paſſe to the delights of a permanent and immortall lyfe. In ſo much as this ſweet cõſolation, is inſeparable from our tormẽts, for they ſhal one day finiſh. *O ſweet End*, ſince thou breakſt the chaynes of our captiuity! *O ſweet End*, ſince thou makeſt vs to reuiue, neuer for to dy! *O ſweet End*, ſince thou putſt an end to all our ſufferances! *O ſweet End*, ſince we dye to reuiue for euer!

How Worldlings dye deliciously without euer think ng thereof.

CHAP. XIII.

WE must needes confesse how the soules of the world, are so deepely taken, with the sleepe of their pleasures, as they are euen drowned in their blindnes, without feare of the precipices, that encompasse them round. Ioy transports them, gladnes rauishes them, rest charmes them, hope comforts them, riches moderats their feare, health fortyfies their courage, & all the vanityes nurse them, and bring them vp in the forgetfulnesse of themselues, so, as they may neuer be able to vse any violence, for to breake the chaynes of their captiuity. A pittifull thing, how they neuer consider the while, that this ioy wherwith they are so carryed away, eue vanishes quite lyke a flash of lightening; that this gladnesse wherewith they are rauished, destroyes it selfe, with its owne violence, in running incessantly vnto its end; That the repose which charmes them, cōcludes with an eternall vnrest; that the hope which cō-

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forts them, quite changes it ſelfe by litle & litle into deſpayre; That theſe riches which do moderate their feare, during their lyfe, augments it at their death; that the health which ſtrengthens their courage, whiles the calme and tranquility of their fortune laſts, doth bread them a thouſand ſtormes throgh the abſence thereof, where they run danger of ſhipwracke. And finally that all thoſe vanityes, which ſerue them as a Nurſe, and Schoole miſtreſſe to trayne them vp in vices, are as ſo many bad Pylots which make a traffike of their loſſe and ruine.

When I image with my ſelfe, the blindneſſe whereto the men of this world are brought, I cannot chuſe but be moued with compaſſion for them. Is it not a ſtrang thing and worthy of pitty, that they runne as faſt as euer they can vnto Death, without ceaſe, without intermiſſion, without fetching of their breath, and without euer taking any heed of the way they hold, as if they liued inſenſible in all their ſenſes? The Sunne, which riſeth euery morning, ſets euery euening, for to let them ſee, how the light of their life, ſhould haue at laſt, a laſt ſetting as well as it. The Age, which makes them hoary, and which keepes reckoning of their yeares, through the accõpt of the wrinckles

which

which it cauſeth to grow on their face, preacheth nought els, but the neceſſity of their departure. All their Actions termine not a whit, but to the ruine of the body, from whence they fetch their motion, ſince euery action of it ſelfe ſtill tendes to its end. How can they chuſe but thinke of death, if all the ſubiects which are found in Nature, do euen cary the very lineaments thereof in the face? The Sunne dyes in running his race. The Moone dyes in her perpetuall inconſtancy. The ayre dyes with its coruption. The birds ſeeke death in flying. The brute beaſts in running, and the fiſhes in ſwimming in the water. The ſeaſons dye, in ſpringing againe as well as the trees. The flowers dye, with the day that hath ſeene them blow forth. The earth dyes in the order of tyme, ſince her yeares are counted. The Sea ſinckes it ſelfe by litle and litle into its proper abyſſes. The fyre conſumes it ſelfe in its heat; and Nature it ſelfe that ſerues for a ſecond cauſe, in the generation of all things, deſtroyes it ſelfe, by litle and litle with them.

I ſpeake nothing of men, ſince they haue nothing more proper then Death. What meanes, trow you, to forget this ſweet neceſſity of dying, whoſe law very happily

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diſpenſeth with none? yet for all that, do not doubt but there are many in the world, who would neuer be dying: but this were a childiſh language of theirs, ſo farre from reaſon, and common ſenſe, as one had need to declare himſelfe to be a ſtarke foole, for to excuſe himſelf of the errour, or rather of the cryme. We do allwaies contemne the good vnknowne; and as we naturally lyue in the apprehenſion of looſing that which we poſſeſſe, we cleaue to the preſent; ſo true it is that all things do eſcape vs, and fly away frõ vs. What a life were it for vs to lyue eternally in the miſerable condition, wherein we are borne? What a life would it be, to be alwayes breathing in ſighes, in mourning, & in playnts? What a life were it to dy neuer, and to ſuffer without ceaſe, ſince miſeryes and paynes are the miſerable accidents of our bodies? it would euen be a liuing death, or rather a dying life, a thouſand times more cruell and intollerable then death it ſelfe. Happy then, yea thrice happy is that laſt inſtant, which makes vs get forth of the Empire of tyme! moſt pleaſing is the moment, which leades vs into the Eternity! O ſweet agony, ful of extaſy and rauiſhment! O glorious *Ioſeph*, guide now my pen in this faire labyrinth of death, wherein it is wandering,

ring, to touch at ſome thing of your laſt rauiſhments, when as you gaue vp your ſoule on the lips of himſelfe that created them.

Lyfe hath nothing ſo delicious as your death: you dy in the armes of the mother of lyfe, and of lyfe it ſelfe. And ſhall I ſay, that is a death? You amorouſly expire on the mouth of your Redeemer, that is to ſay, on the gate of Paradiſe; what ioy! The pen fals out of my hand, as if it were ſenſible of theſe incomparable pleaſures, wherwith the end of your holy lyfe was crowned, but I hope to recouer it agayne very ſhortly, for to ſpeake more worthily thereof, if theſe ſecret Vowes, which I haue already offered you, may be gratefull to you. Let vs ſay then confidently, that of all the actions of lyfe, the laſt of death, is the welcomeſt of al, to ſuch as haue lyued well; and it is permitted to all the world to liue well.

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Goodly Conſiderations vpon this important verity; That whatſoeuer we do, we dye euery houre without ceaſe.

CHAP. XIIII.

THE inhabitants of *Nylus* are ſo accuſtomed to heare the dreadfull noyſe of its waters alwayes roaring, as they haue no eares to feele the incõmodity therof. Let vs ſay the ſame in a diuers ſenſe, of men in the world, that they are ſo habituated to this ſweet feeling of dying, without ceaſe, as they perceiue not thẽſelues to dy awhit. They breath, in dying, the aire of the Death which they ſigh forth, without thinking euer of Death. Aſtrange thing to liue continually in Death, and to dy euery day in life without once dreaming of the neceſſity of their end, whither they run alwaies! They do nothing els but dy, and they haue no care but to liue. For if they ſpeake, the ayre wherof they forme their words, cauſeth the lights to dye, which is the Clocke of life, the reſpirations the minutes; theſe minutes are coũted, and one ſucceding to the other, the laſts

ſtrikes

ſtrikes the houre of Death. If they eate, the very food that nouriſhes them, doth putrify in their bodyes, as in a dunghill, in ſigne that they are full of corruption; and this infectiõ by little and little ruines the infected veſſel wherein it is encloſed. If they ſleepe, they exteriourly carry the countenance of death, which they hide within. In fine there is no action, wherein they may be any wayes employed, which is not a Symbole of Death.

If the fooliſh errours of theſe men of the world, concluded not in an irreparable domage, they would afford as much pleaſure as they moue pitty. For one gets into his Caroch, with purpoſe to goe to ſome faire houſe of his in the Country, without conſidering the while, how that very way of his walke, is euen the ſame of Death, whither Tyme, which is the Coachman, leades him inſenſibly with all his company. So as if they go not to lye, for this dayes iourney, at the lodging of the Tombe, it is put of for the morrow after. Another embarkes himſelfe in a Pinnace for to ſayle into the Indyes, & himſelfe is a Pinnace the while, embarked in the ſea of the world, from the moment of his birth, ſayling without ceaſe, at the pleaſure of the wind, wherewith age doth repleniſh

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the ſayles, and that without once being able to land, but in the hauen of the Tombe. This Gallant heere ſhalbe going in poſt, to ſee his Miſtreſſe, and he hath no other obiect in all his courſe, then to arriue as ſoone as he can, to the place where ſhe lodgeth. Foole as he is, he conſiders not the while, how that euery ſtep he puts forward on his way, he approacheth the nerer to the Tombe, whither he runs with full ſpeed, vpon the ſame Poſthorſes he takes to compaſſe his amourous deſires. Another there, wil be going more eaſily in a Litter, and with leſſe incommodity for feare the heate or cold may ſeeme to preiudice his health; but let him go as eaſily as he will, yet Death will not fayle to lead his mules in ſuch ſort, as he ſhall but paſſe onely by his howſes of pleaſure, ſo to go forwards in his way directly to the Tombe, what digreſſion ſoeuer he ſeemes to make, to put it off.

Thinke on this truth, my Dames, during the calme and tranquility of your fortune; the ſpring tyme of your lyfe, will not alwayes laſt: euen as the ſeaſons of the yeare ſucceed ech other, ſo thoſe of age purſue one another. But as we ſee often how the intemperance of the ayre, cauſeth the winter to arriue in the midſt of ſommer; take heed

the

the intemperance of your humours, produce not the winter of death in the midſt of the ſpring tyme of your lyfe. In vayne do you ſet forth all your deceiptfull markes of immotality, the time ſcornes them, and I laugh at them. For if to day you be ſomething, to morrow are you lyke to be nothing: *So paſſeth away the glory of the world, all flyes into the Tombe.*

The Tombe of the pleaſures of the Sight.

CHAP. XV.

LET all the fayreſt Obiects, which are in Nature appeare in my preſence, to behold ech one in its turne, the foundation of their Sepulcher. Let the Heauen ſhew forth, open to view, its ſerene countenance; the Sun his liuely brightnes; the Moone her ſiluer day; the ſtarres their twinckling ſparkes; the Ayre its fayre nakednes; The birds their warblings, & their richeſt robes of plumages, enamelled with euery ſort of colours; The Trees the ornament of their bloſſomes, and the decking of their fruits; the Meadowes the tapeſtry of their greenes; and Mountaynes the moſſy ſtuffe,

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ſtuffe, wherewith they couer their crumpt backes; the forreſts their thicke branches; the ſauadge beaſts, the extrauagant beauty which Nature hath impreſſed in their brutiſh kind, through the diuerſity of the formes which they repreſent; the Earth, the inſide of its coffers, repleniſhed with all ſorts of riches; the Riuers, the Chriſtall of their ſtreames; the Fountaynes, the liquid glaſſes of their waters; the Sea its huge wateriſh mãtle; & the fiſhes, the infinite number of their figures, wholy different. Let the world yet giue forth new wonders, and beauty exhibit to our view its fayreſt lyuing pictures; yet all thoſe obiects, taken altogether, are no more then a little duſt, encloſed in the cruſt of artificiouſnes, which Tyme quite ruines, by little and little.

Thou man of the world, who ſeeſt but only by thine eyes, in cheriſhing thy life ſo with the pleaſures of the ſight, admire yet once in thine *Idea*, the obiects, whoſe beauty heeretofore thou haſt adored; then repreſẽt to thy ſelfe according to the argument thou canſt draw from the nature of their being, what is become of them, or what are they like to be. If it be ſome proud pallace, wherein the order, the riches, the magnificence, & the induſtry of the workeman be in diſpute

about

about glory, to know who ſhall carry away the prize; conſider that Tyme deſtroyes it at all howers, and that it ſhall neuer giue ouer, till it ſee the ruines of it.

If the charmes of Art do charme the ſight, in admiration of the fayreſt colours, laid on a rich ſubiect, think but a little of the fraylty of thoſe accidents. For all the beautifulleſt colours that are, do fetch their birth from that of flowers. And can we ſee any thing more changeable, or of ſo ſmall a date as they? So as if the allurements of the beauties of Nature, do rauiſh thy ſoule by thy eyes, defēd thy ſelf forthwith through the knowledge thou haſt of their miſery; ſince in effect the fayreſt Lady in the world, is but a maſſe of fleſh, which corrupts euery moment, vntill ſuch tyme, as it be wholy formed to corruption, and this corruption into wormes.

As for all other things whatſoeuer which thou mayeſt haue ſeene, being no whit more noble then it, thou Mayſt well be iudging of their defects by the conſequence. In ſo much as whatſoeuer the Heauēs, haue glittering, the Earth rare, Nature gay, & Art more admirable, if thou ſerueſt thy ſelfe of the touchſtone of thy iudgement, to know the matter which ſupports the image, thou ſhalt ſoone find all to be no more then duſt;

and ſo mayeſt feare leaſt it happen to fly in thine eyes, to make thee blind, if thou looke ſt but too neere vpon it.

The Tombe of the Pleaſures, of the Senſe of Hearing.

CHAP. XVI.

YOV Soules of the world, who ſuffer your liberty to be taken away through your eares, with the deceiptful charmes of Syrens: You I ſay, who ſigh for ioy, for delectation, and extaſy, amidſt the pleaſures of a ſweet harmony, eyther of voyces or inſtruments, lēd your guilty eares to heare the reaſons, which ſeeme to condemne your errours. I doubt not a whit, but the purling of a ſiluer brook, the ſweet running murmur of a fountayne, the pretty warbling of birds, and the amourous accents of a delicate voyce, ioyned with the ſweet allurements of the melody of a Lute, are of force inough to captiue your ſpirits vnder the empire of a thouſad ſorts of delights. But yet returne a little from this wandering of yours; Content your ſelfe, with the loſſe of liberty, and ſaue your reaſon to repayre your domage.

At

At ſuch tyme as you ſtand liſtening to the humming noyſe of this riuer, & to the murmur of this fountayne, imagine this truth the while, *That all paſseth away, that all ſlides along like to the waues*. Their language preacheth nought els. Thoſe birds euen call for death, at the ſound of their chaunting like the Swan. And if the harmony of a voice, or Lute ſo charme you, cõſider awhile how the pleaſure of this melody is formed of the ayre, and that in the ſame inſtant, it reſolues into ayre agayne, ſo as the delights euen dy in their birth. You let your eares be tickled with the charmes of Eloquẽce; imagine you that ſince it is true, that as neither *Cicero*, nor *Demoſthenes* were exempt from the Tombe, or corruption, with al their fayre elocution, ſo ſhall you neuer be able to perſwade death with al your gallant diſcourſes, to prolong the terme of your life, but a moment. True Eloquence conſiſts in preaching Vertue, and true Harmony to hould reaſon alwayes at accord with the Will, for to deſire nothing but what is iuſt.

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The Tombe of the other Pleasures, that are affected to the Senses.

CHAP. XVII.

OPEN your eyes, you worldlings, to discouer playnly the truth of your crymes: You take your pleasures to cherish daintily your bodyes, as if you knew not their miseryes. But why say I, your pleasures? Can you take any contentment, to stuffe your putrified body, with a new matter of corruption? Whatsoeuer you eat is a symbole of Death, & so shall you dy in eating. You do nothing but heape dung vpon dung, & add but infectiō to infection. I graunt that your life, passeth euer its dayes in continuall banquetting. But I would fayne haue you let me see the pleasure which is left you of all this good cheere at the latter course. Is this a contentment, trow you, to haue the Belly stuffed with a thousand ordures, to put your spirit on the racke with the stinking fume of meates, not well concocted, which arise vp in the brayne? Is it well with you to haue the head drousy, the pulse distempered, the spirit benummed, & reason astray? Be-

Behold heere a part of the delights which succeed your delights, and you haue no care but to pamper your bodyes, as if you lyued but onely for them, not considering the meane while, how the same very food, which affoards them lyfe, euen brings them to death. Inebriate your selfe with these brutish pleasures, and by the example of the new Epicures, haue no passion but to conserue them; yet of necessity, must the imaginary paradise of your lyfe, conclude in a true Hell on the day of your death. For all these roses shalbe changed into thornes in that last moment. Glut you, and crumme your bodies for to satiate the wormes withall. But this is nothing as yet. Your soules being the companions of your euills; must needs be euerlastingly punished in an eternity of paynes. O dreadfull Eternity! It seemes in a fashion, that those men of the world may well be excusing their vanity, that causes them to carry both amber and muske about them, since they are all full of of infection and corruption, which makes me belieue, that they feare, least men come to sent the stench of their miseries, & so engage them, or rather inforce them to serue themselues of this cunning. In effect, all these odours, and these perfumes smell so

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strong of earth, as we cannot loue the smoke without runing into danger of the fire. So as those who tye their spirit to these vayne *idea's* of pleasures, are in loue with shadows and despise the bodyes. They smell very well, that smell not ill; and such as habituate their bodyes to Perfumes, can neuer endure the stinke of the mortuary Torches, which shall encompasse their bed, at the houre of death.

I speake to you, my Ladyes, who doe so passionately affect these foolish vanityes. I remit you euer to the instant of Death, for to receyue the iudgement of your actions, full of shame and reproach. Deale you so, as your soule may sauour well, rather then the body; since the one may euery moment be cited to the presence of God, and the other serues as a prey for the worms. It were better your teeth should sauour ill, then your actions; for those are subiect to corruption, and these heere shall liue eternally, eyther in payne or glory. I leaue you to thinke of these important verityes.

For the pleasures of *Touching*, being of the selfe same nature with the rest, and hauing no more solid foundatiō then they, we may draw the consequence of the same argumēt with them, and conclude, how this imaginary

ginary pleasure cannot seeeme to cleaue but to weaker spirits, who loue only the earth; because its obiect is so vile and base, as we had need to abase our selues, to obserue its aymes. Let vs resume the ayres of our former discourses, and say that the pleasures of the world, do not subsist in the world, but through the name onely, which is giuen them. For in effect they are nothing but a dreame, & the shadow of a shadow, whose body we neuer possesse. Such as loue them are not capable of loue, since they fix their affections on the pourtraicts onely of imagination, and of the *Idea's* which the wind defaceth euery moment. True contentmẽt consists in thinking alwayes of death. And this is the onely pleasure of lyfe, since it termines in the delights of Eternity.

How he who hath imposed the Law of Death vpon vs, hath suffered al the paynes therof together.

CHAP. XVIII.

I NOTE an excesse of loue in the History of that great King who being touched with a generous desire, to banish vice for euer from his Kingdome, &

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to bring in Vertue, there to reigne in peace; among an infinite number of Lawes, which he impoſed on his ſubiects, the payne of pulling out the eyes, was decreed for his puniſhment that ſhould violate the moſt important of thē. The ill lucke was, that his only Sonne, ſhould fall the firſt into that cryme. What ſhall he do? And what ſhal he reſolue vpon? For to quit himſelfe from the aſſaults both of loue and pitty, which nature gaue him, euery moment he could not do; ſince the halfe of his bloud, takes away fury from the other halfe. What likelihood for one to arme himſelfe againſt himſelfe, to excite his arme to vengeance, to deſtroy his body? He hath no loue but for the guilty, & how ſhall he haue paſſion to deſtroy him? He ſees not but by his eyes, and how ſhall he be able to ſee him blind? In fine, he ſits not on his Throne, but to keepe him the place; & how ſhall he poſſibly mount this throne to prononce the ſentence of his puniſhment? Of neceſſity yet the errour muſt be puniſhed if he wil not ſoyle the ſplendour of his iuſtice. which is the richeſt ornament of his Crowne, and the onely vertue that makes him worthy of his Empire.

Nature aſſayles him powerfully, Loue giues him a thouſand batteryes, and euen

Pitty often wrings the weapons from his hands; and yet Reason for all that, seemes to carry away the victory. There is no remedy, but needs must he yield to Nature, Loue, and Pitty; but yet finds he a way to make Iustice triumph in satisfying the law. He puls out one of his sonnes eyes, for one halte of the punishment, and causes another to be pluckt forth from himselfe, for to finish the chasticement. What excesse of Goodnes!

Let vs draw now the mysticall Allegory from this history, and say, That our Redeemer represents this iust King, at such tyme, as in the terrestrial Paradise, he imposed this law of obedience vnder paine of death vpon man, being the Sonne of his hands, as the noblest worke of his Creation. This man being the first borne, becomes lykewyse at that same very tyme the first guilty in contemning the commaundements of his Soueraygne: He eats that fatall Apple, or rather opens with his murderous teeth that vnlucky box of *Pandora*, stuffed with all manner of euills. The punishment euen followes his offence so neere, as he instantly incurres the payne of death. But what a prodigy of loue! The Creator being touched with the miserues of his creature, takes away the rigour of the law, without destroying it quite

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or infringing the ſame: I meane, that he ſeuers death from death in cauſing the guilty to ariſe agayne from his aſhes, for to liue eternally. And the meanes, wherof he ſerues himſelfe, is to dye with him, and in the Chalice of his paſſion to drinke all the bitternes of death, for to chãge the nature therof. In ſuch ſort, as this way of death conducts vs now to eternall lyfe.

O ſweet Death, a thouſand tymes more pleſing thẽ whatſoeuer is moſt pleaſing in the world! *O ſweet Death*, a hundred, and a hundred tymes more delicious, then all the pleaſures vnited together! *O ſweet Death*, where the body finds repoſe, the ſpirit contentmẽt, & the ſoule its whole felicity! *O ſweet Death*, the only hope of the afflicted, the ſole conſolation of the wiſeſt, and the laſt remedy for all the euils of the world! *O ſweet Death*, and a thouſand tymes more admirable, then his goodnes that impoſed the law, ſince through the ſame very Goodnes, he would needs be ſuffering the paine it ſelfe, for to take away the payne. Who durſt refuſe to drinke, in his turne, in the Chalice where God himſelfe hath quenched his thirſt? Let vs go thẽ very holily to Death; for to go cheerefully thither, is to make loue and vertue lead vs into the ſepulcher, if we meane to find therein a

ſecond

ſecond cradle, where we may be reborne anew, neuer to dye any more.

I cannot forget that goodly Cuſtome of the *Egyptians*, that when as a Sonne being armed with fury, ſhould paſſe to that extremity of cruelty, as to take away the life from him, who had giuen him the ſame, he incurred this ſweet puniſhment withall, to be ſhut vp for three whole dayes in priſon togeather with the body, whoſe Parricide he was: & I ſhould thinke, that ſuch as had impoſed the law, had this beliefe, that the terrible and dreadfull obiect of the cryme, was a torment of force inough for the guilty, to extort the laſt teares from his eyes, & the vtmoſt playntes from his ſoule. For in effect Nature neuer belyes it ſelfe, it is alwayes it ſelfe, it may well affoard ſome intermiſſion of loue & of pitty, but yet at laſt, it ſnatches the hart from the bowels, through a violece worthy of it ſelfe.

Let vs ſee now the backſide of this Meddall, ſo to draw forth the miſtery, out of this moral verity. We repreſent to day, this guilty ſonne, ſince we haue put our Redeemer to Death, who is the common Father of our ſoules. The puniſhment, which the law of his Iuſtice, hath now impoſed vpon vs, it to looke cõtinually on this Tree of the Croſſe;

whereon

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whereon our crymes haue made him to expire, for to repayre their enormity withall! *O ſweet punishment*! For ſpilling the bloud of him, who hath filled our veynes, the law exacts no more of vs then teares! For hauing nayled him on the Croſſe, Iuſtice enioynes vs no other payne, then that of nayling our eyes on the ſame pillar wherupon he is nayled! For hauing crowned him with thorns, he would haue vs to trample vnder foote, the roſes of our pleaſures! In fine, for putting him to Death, he demaundes no more at our hands, but ſighes and teares for to teſtify our ſorrow for the ſame! Who could refuſe to afford him this pitty, or loue, who for our loue hath had ſuch pitty vpon vs? His hart hath beene melt to teares of bloud, vpon the Aultar of the Croſſe; and ſhall we not drowne our ſelues, in the ſea of our teares, being ſo preſt with the ſtorme of our ſighs & plaints? Shall we ſuffer the rockes to vpbrayed vs of inſenſibility? The Sunne hath beene darkned at the ſight of our cryme, and ſhall not we wax pale for ſorrow, of committing the ſame? The Moone had beene hiding her ſelfe for ſhame, and ſhall not our countenãce awhit be couered therewith? The earth hath quaked, and ſhall not our hearts ſeeme to tremble for feare? The veyle of the Temple

hath

hath beene rent in twayne, and ſhall our bowels remayne entire? In fine, Nature hath ſuffered, and ſhall we be exempt from ſuffering, at the ſight of our Redeemer nayled vpon the Croſſe?

Weepe, weep you mine eyes, all the water of your humide ſpringes; powre you forth boldly the laſt teare on this Croſſe, where my Sauiour hath ſpilt the laſt drop of his bloud. Do you imitate the Sunne, in your little courſe, drowne your ſelues within the ſea of your teares, if you would, like to him be ariſing againe from your Weſt, and ſhine without him in the Eaſt of an eternall light. And thou my hart, vnty thy ſelfe a little, frō all the feelings of the pleaſures of the world, ſince the only roſes of true contentment, are found amidſt the thornes of the Croſſe. The whole felicity concludes in this point, of neuer hauing any other, then that of carying the croſſe. This is the ladder of *Iacob*, which ſerues vs to mount vp to Heauen with all. This is the brazen Serpent, that cures our ſoules from the poyſon of the vanities of the world. Without the Croſſe there is no pleaſure, nor repoſe in the world. He that caryes the croſſe with him, may well ſay, more cōfidently then *Bias* did, that he caryes all his riches about him. For therein alone are comprized

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prized all the treaſures of the world; therein conſiſts the accompliſhmẽt of our happines. O *deere Croße*, the only wiſh of my ſoule! O *deere Croße*, the ſweet obiect of mine eyes! O *deere Croße*, in which alone I put my hope! O *deere Croße*, vpon which alone, do I eſtabliſh the foundation of all my felicities! O *deere Croße*, where my wiſhes find their end, & my enuy, its vtmoſt limits! O *deere Croſſe*, deere Inſtrument of my victory, and rich Crowne of my tryumph! I pretend to nothing els in the world, but the Croſſe, I abãdon al for it. For as I reuiue not but through it only, ſo will I dy with it, and deliciouly expire vpon its couch. And this is the only meanes to be vnſenſible of Death.

You Soules of the World, I preſent you with the Croſſe, as with a new Arke of *Noe*, to warrant you frõ the deluge of the diuine Iuſtice, and that deadfull day of iudgment. Can you refuſe to kiſſe the wood, wherupõ you haue nayled your Sauiour? Behold the wonder! He hath exchanged your cruelty into loue. For he hath affoarded you the inuention, to nayle his hands, that he might haue alwayes his armes ſo ſtretched forth to imbrace you withall. The like may I ſay, that he cauſed his Feet to be ſo nayled, to attend you at all houres, ſince euery houre is

he

he ready, in his will, to pardon you. O prodigy of goodnes! O miracle of Loue! Lord graunt I beseech thee, I become not vngratefull, for so many fauours done me! Teach my hart a language, wholy diuine, to thãke you diuinely for them; whiles I can offer you no more, for a whole acknowledgemẽt of al, then the only griefe of not hauing any thing worthy of you.

The pleasure which is found in Liuing wel, for to Dye content.

CHAP. XIX.

IT is impossible to expresse, the pleasures of a holy Soule, its contentments are not to be so called, its sweetnesse hath another name, its extasyes, & rauishments cannot be comprehended, but by the selfe same hart which feeles them. For not to lye, it hath ioyes wholy of Heauen, it tasts the delights most deuine, and with a like grace, it carries its terrestriall Paradise with it. If its thoughts seeme to touch vpon earth, it is but only for its contempt, for anon they take their flight to heauen-wards, as

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as the onely obiect, which they do ayme at at all tymes. In fine, as they are immortall, they neuer regard but the Eternity. The paynes it endures, haue no bitternes with them, but only in name, the miseries do euen change their quality in its presence, as if they awed its courage. If misfortune chance to light vpon it, with some sad accident or other, it receiues it as a present from Heauen, rather thē as any disgrace of fortune. If death seeme to snatch away from it, what most it loues, it payes nature the teares it owes it, and at the same very tyme, satisfyes reason through generons actions with its constancy. If it loose all the goods which it had for portion on earth, it complaynes not a whit, but of it selfe, while its offences seeme to deserue a great chastizement.

On the other side, as it placeth not its affection on the riches of the world, fortune can take away nothing from it, but what it is willing to loose; because it hath nothing proper, but the hope of possessing one day the richest treasures, in a Land which is wholy scituated out of the Empie of Time, and inconstancy thereof. Let it thunder, let the sea mount vp to the Heauens, vpon the backe of its waues; let the warres dispeople townes, and all the disasters of the world

make al together an Army to set vpon it, yet remaynes it firme, and stable as a rocke in the midst of this Sea: & if it feare any thing, it is but the feare of offending God. O sweet feare! more noble then all the courages of the world! Thus liues it content amids the broyles, whereof the world is so full. Thus liues it most happily amids the sad accidents which land euery houre on the shore of the world. Thus enioyes it a sweet repose amids the troubles, and continuall tribulations of Mortals. It loues not health, but to employ its lyfe in the seruice of him, who hath bestowed it vpon it. If it laugh, it is for the ioy it hath, that it neuer had any such beneath, since the Redeemer had neuer beene gathering but thornes: and if it weep, it is for the griefe of its proper miseryes, rather then for those of its body, being very solicitous to conserue entiere, and without blemish the image and semblance of its Creatour, whose impression it had receyued on the first day of its being.

In fine, it is capable, neyther of pleasure nor yet of sadnes, but for the onely interests of its saluation, whose thoughts are euer present with it. And is not this a sweet lyfe? So as if Time strike the houre of its retrayt from its first disposition to death, it deduceth a

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laſt, for to yield vp it ſelfe into the hands of him that created it. In vaine doth euill ſeeke to afflict its ſenſes, the light of its conſtancy would be alwayes appearing through the ſhadowes of its ſad countenance. To what condition ſoeuer had it beene rayſed vnto, it takes no care to quit the greatneſſes, becauſe it had neuer tyed its affections thereunto. The Sun may well ariſe, and ſett agayne; yet ſhe beholds it alwayes with the ſelfe ſame eye. Its Eaſt and Weſt are equall to it, though they be different, attending without anxiety, the Weſt of the torch of its lyfe. The labour which it hath, to prepare it ſelfe for death, is not very great, ſince ſtill it hath lyued in this preparation. Notwithſtanding as we cannot employ all our tyme in ſo important a buſines, it deliciouſly ſpends the remaynder of its lyfe therein: It ſmyles to behold all the world to weep about its bed, and being not able to ſpeake any more to cõplaine of their plaints, it ſighs to heare them ſigh. For it ſuffers, not but what it ſees others to ſuffer. All the griefe is in the body, and if it ſeeme a litle, to reflect vpon it, it is but a griefe of loue, with ſighing in expectation of its laſt ſigh, for to behold the onely obiect of its good.

Let the wyfe cry, the children pull their

hayre

hayre; and the neereſt of its kyn be carying on their viſage the ſadnes, which they haue in their hart; let the beſt friends be partners of this condolement, and euery one in his faſhion complayn of the diſaſter ſo befalne him; yet ſhe alone ſtands prayſing the heauens for it, and bleſſeth the day, and houre now ready to produce this laſt moment, where the eternity of its glory ſhould begin Well may death ſeeme to make its viſage pale, but not the hart, for loe it appeares in theſe laſt extremes more refulgent then euer, lyke a cãdle which is ready to go forth; it hath the voyce of a dying Swan, which is able to charme all the dolours that enuirone it round. The Diuells are aſtoniſhed to behold it ſo deuoyd of aſtoniſhment; the force of its inuincible courage doth ſo weaken their power, as they are conſtrayned to pretend nothing, to triumph at. In ſuch ſort, as with the armes of Vertue, it caryes away the crowne vnto the end of the race, euen dying with the deſire it hath to dye, rather then of ſorrow, for not lyuing long inough. Thus through force of the ſighes of loue, it ſends forth at laſt, through a laſt puſh of loue, the laſt ſigh from the bowels, and ſo flyes away vpon its wings, vnto the fellowſhip of the Angels into Heauen, where

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its holy thoughtes had now along tyme eſtabliſhed their dwelling. O ſweet dwelling! O happy death, which conducts vs thither! O welcome dwelling, and moſt delicious, the moment which affoards the Eternity thereof.

The Picture of the Life and Death of a ſinfull Soule.

CHAP. XX.

OF all the miſerable conditions, whereto a man may be reduced, that ſame of lyuing in Mortall Sin, is the moſt vnhappy and vnfortunate. The Slaues in the Galleyes are a great deale more happy, then ſuch a one. For their bondage is limited to a terme; and that of ſin to a payne of an eternall ſeruitude. It is impoſſible, a guilty man ſhould liue content, in the midſt of all the pleaſures of the world, for his cryme is his hangman and torture. If he be preſent at baquets, the remembrance of his offences is mingling of ſome aloes in his delicious meates. If he quench his thirſt with the ſweeteſt nectar in the world, the ſame very

thought wilbe distilling a droppe of gaule into his Cuppe. If he walk into some goodly garden, the imaginatiõ of his faults being alwayes present with him, makes him to feele the Thornes of the Roses he admires. If he go a hunting, the Torturer of his guilty conscience runs after him. Let him goe where he wil through the world, his cryme is his shadow, which followes him throughout. Whatsoeuer he doth, he is euer ready to thinke of what shal become of him, & what fortune soeuer he possesseth, it is neuer great inough to put his spirit in repose.

The least accident that happens to him brings him to Deathes doore, because that finding himself to be guilty, he lyues alwais on the poynt of paying for his cryme. If it rayne, he imagins straight the Heauens are prepared to powre a new deluge vpon him, for to punish him with. If it thunder, he perswades himself presently, that the lightening hath no other ayme, then to light on his guilty head. If the weather be fayre, he sees a sommer without, & a winter within; for his brutish passions produce a continual tempest in his soule. If fortune present him with Scepters, he regards them, but as one apprehending thẽ shortly to be taken away from him, since he deserues them not. In fine

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he wanders in vaine, in the labyrinth of all vanityes, and returnes to himselfe agayne at all tymes, to confesse of force, that he is the most wretched of the world, in the most of all his greatnesses.

If he be taken with a sicknes, behold him on the racke; there are not Priests inough to be found, nor Religions to confesse him, & yet knowes he not what to say. For the nũber of his offences, are without number, and his troubled memory, can but only represẽt to him, the least part of them. The disease seemes to presse him hard in the meane tyme & his paynes do put him anew on the racke. Of all whatsoeuer is reprensented vnto him, there is nothing likes him so much, as the Phisitian doth; but he is now in the point to try his last remedy, after he hath turned ouer all his old Bookes. The Doctours are assembled togeather about his bed, but it is only to bid him Adieu, in a language which he vnderstands not. Behold all the comfort they giue him; in so much as to see the Phisitians so assembled about him, and set by his bed in chayres of Grauity, one would say, they were the Princes of the Senate, that come to pronounce the sentence of Death vpon this guilty wretch. He hearkens attentiuely to them, without hearing them. For

the

the ſcare he hath of vnderſtanding all which they ſay, makes him euen deafe to the halfe. The Syncopes, are the Hangmen, which preſent themſelues to him, for to execute this cruell ſentence of Death. Then the hope of his curing, begins to leaue him. Behold him yet once againe in the ſtrongeſt pangs of his agony. He would confeſſe the euil he hath done, and that which he endures doth hinder him from it. He would recount the hiſtory of his life, but the dolours of his preſent Death, will not permit him to do it. His hart through its vehement ſighes, his eyes through their forced teares, and his Soule by its neceſſary ſighes, do pray his tongue, ech one in its faſhion, to diſcloſe their crymes; but the ſame cannot ſpeake, the rigour of a thouſand puniſhmẽts makes it to be dumbe.

On the other ſide, his ſpirit in the diſorder wherein it finds it ſelfe, can haue no other thoughts then thoſe of ſorrow, for eternally abandoning that, which it loues ſo deerly. He knowes not how to expreſſe a laſt farewell to his pleaſures. Whatſoeuer repreſents it ſelfe to his eyes are ſo many obiects, that renew his payne. If he take heed vnto the beames of the Sun, with peere into his chamber window for to take their leaue of his eyes; he remembers immediately all

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the pleasures he hath taken through help of their fayre light, in a thousand and a thousand places, where it hath beene a witnes of those errors of his. If the weather be foule he thinkes vpon that tyme, which he hath ill spent, imagining withall, that the Heauens being touched with compassion of his disasters, do euen weepe before hand, and bewayle the losse they endure of his Soule. It seemes to him, that the sound of the bells doth call him to the tombe, and that of the Trumpets vnto iudgement. He sees nothing about him, that astonishes him not. He heares nothing that affrights him not. He feeles nothing but his miseryes: his tõgue is all of gaule, & wheresoeuer he layes his hand vpon himselfe, he touches but the dunghill of his corruption.

If his spirit seeme to returne to him againe, by intermission of the traunce wherein he is, he quite forgets the hope of good, through the ill he hath committed, not being able to dispose his soule to any repentãce. The sight of his friends importunes him, that of his children afflicts him, and the presence of his wyfe serues him as a new addition to his sorrow. They behold him not but weeping, & he is neuer strooken with other noyse, then with that of the eryes and

playnts

plaints of his domestickes. The Phisitian goes his wayes out of the chamber, to giue place to the Cõfessour. And the one knowing not how to cure the body, the other hath difficulty to heale the soule, by reason of the despayre wherein he is entangled. Iudge now to what estate must he needs be brought. His speach; that fayles him by litle and litle. His sight is dimme, with his iudgement, and all his other senses receyue the first assaults of Death. They present him with the Crosse, but in vayne, for if his thoughtes be free, he thinkes but of that which he beares of force. They may cry lõg inough to him to recommend himselfe vnto God, the deafnes he hath had before to his holy inspirations doth astonish him now also at this houre.

How many deaths endures he, before his death? How many dolorous sighs casts he forth into the ayre, before the breathing his last? All the punishments of the world, cannot equall that which he endures. For passing out of one litle Hel of paines, he enters into a new, which shall not haue end but with eternity? What good then would he not willingly haue wrought? But his wishes are as so many new subiects of griefe in this impotency, whence he is neuer to

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see himselfe deliuered. Into what amazement is he brought? The Sunne denyes him its light, so as if he behold his misfortunes, it is but onely by the light of the mortuary Torches, which giue him light, but to conduct him to the tombe. O how the Houre of these last extreames, drawes forth in length! Ech moment of his lyse snatches out the hart from his bosome euery moment, without putting him to death. On which side soeuer he turnes himselfe, both horrour and despaire beset him round. He caryes Death in his soule, for that which he is to incurre; Death on his body, for that which he now endures; Death in his senses, since they dye by little, and little: in so much as all his life is but a liuing Death, that consumes him slowly to reduce him into ashes.

Being now brought to these streights, the wicked spirits imploy the last endeauors of their power for to carry away the victory, after so many conflicts had. What meanes of resistance where there is no pulse, no motiõ no voyce, no tongue? His spirit is now in extremes, as well as his life; and his hart being hardened, is now ready to send forth its last sigh in its insensibility, as if it dyed in dying. His eyes are now no more eyes, for they see no more. His eares may no more be called so

for

for they heare not awhit; and all the other ſenſes, as parts, precede the ruine of their whole. The Soule only reſiſts the cruell aſſaults of Death, in beholding its enemyes in continuall expectation of their prey; but the hower preſſeth, it muſt ſurrender. O cruel neceſſity! In fine, for to finiſh this bloudy Tragedy, the Deuils carry it away to Hell, for recompence of the ſeruices, which it had yealded to them. And this is the lamentable end of ſynfull Soule.

You Soules of the world, who liue not but throgh the life of your pleaſures, behold the fearefull Death, where the life termines. And ſince the heauens, the earth, the elemẽts & whatſoeuer els in nature moues & changes without ceaſe, do you thinke to find any conſtancy, and ſtability in your delights? Know you not, that with the very ſame action wherewith you runne along, withall your contentments, you run vnto your Death? and that during the tyme it ſelfe, that Tyme affoards them vnto you, he takes euen them away from you? We looſe euery houre what we poſſeſſe, what care ſoeuer we take in conſeruing the ſame. My Ladyes, Keep well your gallãt beauties from the burning of the Sunne. If that of the Sunne, or of the fire, be not able to marre them, yet that of

Age

Age and Tyme doth ruine them; notwithstanding all the industry of Vanity, which you haue to employ about them? Put your fayre Bodyes into the racke of another body of iron, to conserue the proportion therof; yet tyme but derides your inuentions. For it assayles you within, and you defend your selues but without only. You haue dared the Heauens inough, with an arrogant eye; you must needs be stooping with the head now at last, for to looke on the earth, whence you are formed. You must needs bow the necke to the yoke of your miseryes, and resume agayne the first forme of your corruption. In going to dauncing, to feasts, and to walke abroad, you go to Death. In vayne do you command your Coachman then to cary you to such a place, since Tyme, as I haue said, conducts him also that caryes you thither. In so much, as on which side soeuer, you turne your selues, you approach vnto the tombe.

After you haue tasted all the pleasures of the world, what shalbe left you of all, but a griefe of the offences in the soule, the sad remembrance of their priuation in the memory, & this sadnes in the hart, for hauing made it to sigh so after your ruine? I doubt very much, least death do astonish you; but if you neuer do thinke vpon it, it will astonish you

a great

a great deale worse, when you shall see it indeed. If to liue and dy, be but one and the selfe same thing, make the Thought of death, while you liue, so familiar to your selfe, that you neuer thinke of any other thing, since you neuer do other thing but dy. So as if to feare it, and neuer to thinke of it, do make its visage the lesse hideous, I would counsayle you, to banish this Thought out of your spirit, but so, as you be in good estate. But on the contrary, the forgetfulnes you haue of it, makes it so dreadfull vnto you, at the least remembrance therof that comes into your mynd, as you seeme almost to be in danger of dying, by the only feare of dying. I cannot abide the weaknes of those spirits, who apprehend an euill so much, which they cannot auoyd; whereas the euill of the feare which they haue, is oftentymes a great deale more bitter, then that which they feare. But the only meane to be cured of this feare, is to liue alwayes in that of God. For the strogest apprehension of Death proceeds from the great number of the Offences, which one hath committed in his life.

A good man feares rather to liue too long then to dy too soone, because he hopes for the recompence of his trauayles, at the end of his course; whiles the wicked can attend

but

but for the chastizement of his sins. So as for to banish this feare from our soule, we had need to haue banished the offences thence. The innocēt hath no feare, but for the iudgement of God, & this feare is inseparable frō his loue; he feares him not but through loue, so as this very feare produceth contētment, and banisheth sadnes in the meane tyme. I leaue you this truth to meditate vpon, that a life of Roses brings forth a death of Thornes.

Let vs say now for Conclusion of this worke, that if one will auoyd this manner of Death, he must alwayes be thinking of Death. There is nothing more sweet, then these thoughts, nothing more welcome thē this remembrance. Without the thoughts of Death, there is no pleasure in life: without the thoughts of Death, there is no comfort in anoyes: without the thoughtes of Death, there is no remedy for our euils. In fyne, to finish all, he who is alwayes thinking of Death, doth thinke continually of the meanes of attaining eternal life. O sweet thoghtes! I would not haue my spirit, to be capable of a thought, but onely to thinke euery moment of death, since it is the onely good, the onely contentment, and the only Repose of lyfe.

A goodly Consideration, and very important both for lyfe, and death.

CHAP. XXI.

IT SHOVLD thinke there were no greater pleasures in the world, then to contemne thē all at once; since in effect, the best spirits do neuer find repose, but in the contempt thereof. I know well, there are certayne chast Pleasures, which we cannot misse; but as the soule hath its senses affected lyke vnto the body, we are to hinder our spirit, from mixing its feelings, with those of Nature, euer feeble and frayle, therby not to tast its delights too deliciously. Our iudgement hath beene giuen vs as a Torch, to guide our steps by our actions, and our thoughtes, in this sea of the world, wherein we are as Slaues in the Galley of our bodyes; and the pleasures we seeke therein are the rockes, where we find our shipwracke. I know well also, that we are to be strongly armed for to defend our selues, while our proper senses do so warre vpon vs. But in this manner of combat, the excesse of payne, produceth the

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excesse of glory, let vs breake the cruſt to see this verity discouered.

The greateſt Saynts, and the wiſeſt men haue beene forced to confeſſe, after a thouſand proofes of experience, that we can not taſt any manner of contentment, without the grace of God. Thou Couetous man, in vayne thou reſts thy vn-reſts on the coffers of thy treaſures. I deny thee to be held content, for if thou reaſoneſt, euen reaſon condemnes thee. If thou ſerueſt thy ſelfe of thy iudgement to be able to do it; what argument ſoeuer thou makeſt, it but fully concludes agaynſt thy opinions. So as thou cāſt neuer enter into the knowledg of thy vayne pleaſures, without departing from that of thy ſelfe. In a word, thou canſt not be a man and be content togeather, in thy miſerable condition; ſince reaſon, and thy contentmēt can neuer ſubſiſt in one ſubiect. Thou Ambitious man, I would lend thee wings for to fly to the heauens of fortune; & it ſeemes to me already, that I ſee thee ſeated in her throne; but looke what greatnes ſoeuer thou poſſeſſeſt, thou dar'ſt not ſay for al that, thou liu'ſt well content, for feare the truth ſhould happē to bely thee. And knoweſt thou not, how Ambition, and Repoſe do alwayes breake fellowſhip, the one with the other?

That

That Pleasure and Feare cannot couple together? and that desires as well as hopes do make the soule to be thirsty? Represent to thy selfe then, the disquietnes which thou findst in thy greatnesses, since thy Ambition cannot limit its ayme within their fruition. How the pleasures of thy possessiõs are mixt with the feare of their short durance; & that by vehemently wishing more & more, thou makst thy selfe vnhappy. In such sort as thou maiest not dare, to cal thy selfe happy, without flattering thy selfe, or rather without blushing for shame.

You Courtiers, let me see the pictures of your felicities, & bring to light what seemes most to afford it the lustre and splendour it hath. I graunt that in the midst of the spring tyme of your life, loue and fortune, with a prodigall hand, haue bestowed vpon you what they had most rare, & beautifull with them; yet would you dare to maynteyne with al this, that you are content during the reigne of your Empire. Whereas if any one haue the boldnes to perswade weake spirits thereunto, let him truly recount vs the history of his pleasures. I know that he will streight be shewing vs some Roses, but I know withall, that he wilbe hiding the Thornes vnder their leaues, as frayle as his

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contentments, though they were of the flo-wers of a reſtles remembrance, gathered in the ſad memory of things paſt; ſince delights are of the ſame nature, alwayes dying, and ſubiect to receiue their tombe, frō the very ſame day they firſt ſprong vp. As for the pre-ſents of Fortune, if ſhe giue them with one hand, ſhe takes them away agayne with the other. So as, her fauorites are ordinarily the moſt vnhappy of all, becauſe that in ſnatching away the goods from thē agayne which ſhe hath once beſtowed vpon them, ſhe dragges them often along, for to bury thē vnder their ruines. And will you call that a pleaſure?

My Dames, you haue but one fayre wed-ding day in all your lyfe, whoſe feaſt you do ſecretly celebrate in your impatiēt deſire and longing hope: but will you cōfeſſe me the truth, that it is but a day of rayne & tem-peſt? For you caſt forth a thouſand ſighes to the winds, and powre out as many teares, being ſo moued through the farewell you giue to your ſelues, whiles you giue your ſelues to another, without knowing, for the moſt part, your owner: which yet were nothing, if the clauſes of your contract did not ſigne you out, the death both of the one and the other, & the incertainty alſo, who

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ſhalbe the firſt. For you muſt confeſſe, that if you loue your ſelues perfectly indeed, you dye euery houre, of the apprehenſion you haue of an euill, which neyther the one nor the other can tell which way to auoyd. I will not ſpeake awhit of the accidents and miſeryes without number, which are inſeparable to this cõdition; I leaue the knowledge therof to thoſe, who haue had the experience. But I pray you to confeſſe freely, if you be content with the felicities that remayne to you, or no?

Thou Couetous man, returne then to thy ſelfe, after thou haſt pulled off the hood of thy blindnes, for to publiſh, how the ſole treaſure of Grace can enrich the ſoule, with all ſorts of contentments; and that without this good, are all goods falſe. Thou Ambitious man, the deuine Iuſtice now puts thee on the racke, to make thee cõfeſſe this truth, that in the onely poſſeſſion of Grace, are comprehended all the deſirable greatneſſes that are, ſince he that poſſeſſeth it, is the greatneſt of the world. You Courtiers, all the Fauours which you ſeeke for, are but wind and ſmoke. It is tyme now to acknowledge your vanity, and to bid a laſt adieu vnto the world. The Kings & Princes, whome you court ſo, are euen as miſe-

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rable as your ſelues, ſince they can afford you but tranſitory goods. Alas! for a handful of earth, will you relinquiſh the pretenſions you haue to heauen? If you will beſtow your tyme well, then court you an omnipotent King, as our God is, whoſe Fauours haue no price, whoſe Graces are infinite, & whoſe Goods are eternall, as his Glory is, wherewith he crownes our labours.

Know you not, that his Almighty hand ſtayes, and mooues agayne, when he pleaſeth the wheele of fortune? How this blind Goddeſſe receiues frō his prouidence, whatſoeuer ſhe giues, and that ſhe ſo ſerues, but as a channell to conuay both diſaſters & proſperities into the Earth? So as if your hart do ſometymes fetch ſighes of loue, after thoſe obiects of duſt, do you then command your ſpirits not to ſtand ſo gazing on the beauty of a riuer, that glides away inceſſantly like its waues. For whatſoeuer may be ſeene faire in Nature, is but a feeble ray, and a firſt *Idea* of the pureſt of this ſoueraigne and adorable Eſſence, wherein conſiſts the accompliſhmēt of al perfection, as the onely inexſtauſtible ſpring, from whence they iſſue, without ſpring or begining. Repreſent vnto your ſelues, that whatſoeuer ſeemes ſo fayre to day, ſhalbe changing the countenance to morrow.

morrow. In ſo much as for to find a permament beauty, and of louely qualityes indeed that might alwayes abide in its purity, we had need to acquit our ſelues of the worlds circuit or bounds, & to carry our thoughtes into Eternity, as to an only manſion where all things are eternall.

This is the leſſon of that great Prophet, when he cryed, *Lord, when ſhall I be able to quench my thirſt in the ſpring of thy eternall pleaſures?* In vaine do you ſeeke for a foũtaine of delights, to quench the thirſt of your hart withal; for what greedines ſoeuer you haue to drinke, after you haue drunke, you ſhall find your ſelues more a thirſt then euer; and the reaſon is good, which is, that the water of this fountaine, retaynes the nature of the ſoyle that produceth the ſame; whence it is, that all the goods of the world are not able to ſatiate the Ambition of one holy Soule, as being created to the poſſeſſion of infinite goods. After one cõtentment had, they ſigh anone after another, and ſo after another and another, without ceaſe. Our ſpirit being quickened with a deuine obiect, points alwaies its lookes, beyond what it poſſeſſeth, it permits it ſelf ſweetly to be drawn like the iron, by its deuine Adamant, for to vnite it ſelfe vnto it, as to its end, whither it tends

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without ceaſe or intermiſſion . In effect what would become of vs, if our deſires & hopes were buryed in the tombe? Such as know what it is to liue, liue not but of the hope of a ſweeter life, & in this ſweet hope do find nothing that is worthy of them, but the contempt they make of all things . O generous contempt of the world, wherein conſiſts our whole glory!

You Courtiers, I leaue you to thinke vpon it, vntill ſuch tyme as you be diſpoſed to put it in practiſe, for to exerciſe withall your more hidden and ſecret vertues. My Dames, you will permit me to tell you the truth. The fayreſt day of your life, is that of Death. This is that nuptiall day of your Soule with its Creatour , a day of pleaſure, rather then of teares, ſince therein do you bid an eternall Adieu vnto the world , and to all its myſeries. A day of gladnes, rather then of ſighes, ſince you giue your ſelues through loue to him, who of his goodnes hath afforded you al things. In the expectation of this happy day it is, that the fayreſt dayes ſhould be tedious to you . Neuer caſt your eyes vpon your glaſſe, but to count the wrinckles, which age makes to grow by little and little on your brow , as ſo many preſaging markes of Death approaching.

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Repreſent vnto your ſelues ſometimes, how all the pleaſures which you haue had are paſſed, that thoſe you now enioy do paſſe, and that thoſe which you are lyke to taſt, ſhall alſo paſſe away; & then imagine with your ſelues in what lamentable caſe ſhall you find your ſelues, at the end of the courſe of your lyfe, with all the Thornes of your withered Roſes? with how many aſſaults of griefe, ſhall you haue your hart thẽ battered? With how many alarmes the ſoule affrighted? and with how many tortures ſhall the one, & the other be rackt? Performe betymes what good ſoeuer you would willingly haue had done at this laſt houre, and take you away their power, and liberty from vpbrading you one day, for the euill, whoſe paines you ſhal carry in that laſt day. It ſeemes, as you lyued not, but to repent you at your death, for hauing lyued ſo ill, not conſidering the while, that ſlow repentances are ordinarily changed into deſpayre.

I bewayle you, my Dames, as often as I thinke of the infinite number of the vanities which do buſy your ſpirit. How much time you beſtow euery day in trimming vp that dunghill of your body, as if your guilty induſtry, were able to driue away the miſe-

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ryes from thence? You do all what you can to make your ſelfe beloued: and know you not that nothing is more louely then Vertue? Do you then purchaſe them altogeather, ſo to make you beloued of al the world and not onely for a day, but euen for euer. The beauty wherof you make ſuch accompt is a fadyng quality that ſubſiſts not, but in its continuall change; it flyes along with you into the Tombe, but it paſſeth more ſwiftly then you: for it euen gets before you by the halfe way. When you are arriued but to the midday of your lyfe, is it come to its full Weſt. When you enter into your Autumne, it arriues to its Winter, where it finds its ruine. Alas! that for a ſmall number of daies, you will ſtād ſo much to pleaſe men, and be diſpleaſing of God for a whole Eternity? O dreadfull Eternity! how profound are thy Abyſſes!

My Dames, as often as this guilty deſire ſhall poſſeſſe you to offend God, in your fooliſh vanityes, thinke a little of the Eternity of the payne, which is to attend your crymes. For one moment of falſe, and imaginary pleaſure, you put your ſelues in daūger of ſuffering eternally an infinite number of true euils indeed. What expect you of the world? It aboūds but with miſeryes. What

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looke you for of Fortune? She is prodigall, but only in misfortunes: All Riches are but of earth, all Greatneſſes of ſmoke, and all Honours of wind; & as for the louely qualityes, which are affected to the body, they euen dy with it. In ſo much as Vertue only, I tell you agayne, is exempt from Death. You neuer thinke but of taking your pleaſures, without conſidering the while, that in paſſing away the tyme ſo, you ſuffer to ſlide away in haſt, the ſmall remaynder of life that is left you. In louing life as you do, you ſhould be ſtriuing to prolõg your dayes and on the contrary you ſeeke digreſſions to paſſe them ouer, without taking any heed therto, as if you went to ſlowly vnto death, and that the way to the Tombe appeared too tardy and tedious to you: wherein truly you take pleaſure to deceiue your ſelues.

Do not ſo flatter your ſelues, my Dames, you muſt needs dy, there is nothing in you that dyes not euery howre. Your fayre golden hayre, which you dayly ſo put vnto the torture of the iron, doth euen dy by little & little with you. For in changing its apparence, it becomes of the colour of Death. The wrinckles of age do foyle the poliſhed glaſſe of your brow, for to marre its beauty and grace. Your fayre Eyes, which I will

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heere terme two Sunnes, for to pleaſe you, do run like to the Sunne, without ceaſe vnto their laſt Weſt, whither Death conducts thē through the help of their proper light. The Lyllies of your Cheekes, do wither euery houre, and the Gilliflowers of your lips do fade euery moment. The Iuory of your teeth corrupts with the breath of tyme, and of age. The ſnow of your Necke melts, and all the louely qualityes of your ſpirit, wax old in their continuall decay.

I admit you to be more beautifull then *Helena*; *Helena* is no more, ſhe is euen paſſed away like a flower, and you are iuſt in the ſame way of her ruine. Her charmes did rauiſh the whole world, & your bayts ſubdue the beſt part of mortalls: but as all is dead with her, ſo all dyes with you. The tyme of her Empyre is expired, that of your Raigne runnes alwayes away. She hath beene, ſhe hath liued, they haue admired her with aſtoniſhment, they haue honoured her with ſacrifices, but all the Temples of her glory are demoliſhed, all the Aultars are ruined, all the Idolatours are reduced to aſhes, & ſcarcely remaynes there any memory of theſe things, ſince euen the very age, which hath ſeene them, is buryed with them in the abyſſes of the paſſed.

You must dye, my Dames, and all those graces, wherewith you captiue Spirits, shall neuer obtayne any fauour of Death. *You must dye*, and all those enticements, wherewith you rauish spirits, haue not allurements inough for to violate the lawes of nature. *You must dye*, and all those charmes, where with you captiue soules, haue not the power to charme death in its fury. *You must dye* and all those pretty graces that make you so admirable, cannot exempt you from the Tombe, nor corruption. *You must dye*, and all your perfections together cannot hinder the houre of your death for a moment only. *You must dye*, and to speake more playnely to you, your golden hayre must needs perish; your eyes so cleere & fayre must needs make a part of the dunghill of your body. The delicate skin of your face, must needs discouer its putrifyed bones, and all your beautyes togeather by changing the countenance, shalbe taking the forme of dust, since you are nothing but dust: Nor do I feare yet to lye, since in effect you are nothing. *You must dye*, & all your rare Coulises serue but onely to consume you; all your Phisitians haue no medicine for to cure the malady of your mortall condition. *You must dye*, and therefore are you carefull of your health

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health in vayne, ſince age pardons not any; yea you dye liuing, and do you what poſſibly you can do, the terme of your lyfe is alwayes ſlyding. *You muſt dye*, nor do all the moments of the day tell you of any other thing. The houres continually ſtrike this verity in your eares, & the Sun neuer ſets, without telling you, in its faſhion, how it only foreruns the time of the ſetting of your lyfe.

We muſt dye, I ſay, at laſt; for we dye without ceaſe; and after ſo many ſighes of miſeryes, we muſt caſt forth to the wind, the laſt of our miſhaps. *We muſt dye*; the ſentence is giuen, the execution is made, and the ſame continues euery day, before our eyes, whēce they are ſo accuſtomed to weep. *We muſt dye*, but ſince there is nothing more certayne, we muſt alwayes be in diſpoſition to dy at all houres, ſince we dye euery moment. *We muſt dye*, but we are to reuiue eternally in glory, ſince we are created, but for it only. *We muſt dye*, but we muſt be reborne agayne from our corruption, for not to dye for euer. Let vs dy boldly then, ſince needs we muſt, but let vs dye in innocency, for to ſhun the death of death. *We muſt dye*, but we muſt riſe agayne before that ſoueraygne Iudge, who is to giue vs the recompence of our trauayles

uayles, or els to impoſe the payne of our crimes vpon vs. *We muſt dye*, but it is but for once, and of that onely moment depends our whole vnhappines, or felicity. *We muſt dye*, but we muſt yield accompt of the lyfe paſt, to receyue the guerdon, or paine which is due thereto for euer. *We muſt dy*, and to delyuer vs happily from the daunger of this ſweet neceſſity, muſt we liue well. *You muſt dye, you Soules of the world*; ech one ſeemes to cary his tombe with him. Laugh you alwayes, ſing continually, be you euery day at your banquets, and take your ſports in a continuall chaſe of diuers pleaſures, after all which notwithſtāding muſt you needs dy, and in this cruell ſeparation of you frō your ſelues, your laughings chāge to teares, your ſongs of gladnes into lamentable cryes of ſorrowes, and all your banquets, & pleaſures into bitter plaints, which torment your hart, and put your ſoule vpon the racke.

There might be ſome manner of ſatisfaction perhaps, to heare the diſcourſes which men of the world do hould, if their blindnes the while do not afford mattter of compaſſion. One takes paynes to recount al the pleaſures he hath taken, during his life; another keepes account of the good fortunes he hath had, a third aſſures vs that he hath poſ-

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ſeſſed heertofore a great number of treaſures; & a fourth endeauours to perſwade as many as will belieue him, that he hath beene on the top of the greateſt dignityes. What diſcourſes of ſmoke are theſe? For he that hath taſted ſo many contentments, hath nothing left him, but the ſad remembrance of the hauing once had the poſſeſſion of them. Another, who yet now thinkes on the good fortunes which once he hath had, makes himſelfe a new vnhappy, through the memory of his paſſed felicities. He that caſts his eyes on the aſhes of his riches, inſenſibly conſumes himſelfe, in the ſelfe ſame fire that conſumed them. And another that reares vp his head aloft, for to behold through his teares, the place from whence he fell, euen looſeth the force for euer to riſe againe, notwithſtáding that it be good for him, to ſleepe often, ſo to be a framing of theſe dreames. For cuẽ as all thoſe pleaſures, and goods are ſlid, & vaniſhed away, with the things that ſeemed the moſt durable; ſo all the contentment, & all the goods which may any wayes appertaine vnto vs, ſhall fly away; and the worſt is, that we run after them, for to ſigne our Tombe in their Sepulcher.

Salomon hath had ſo many pleaſures; *Creſus* paſſeſſed ſo much riches; *Alexander* receiued

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so great honours, & *Helena* so many prayses for her incomparable beauty. But *Salomon* is no more but dust, with all his riches; *Alexander*, but earth with all his honours; nor *Helena* any more then corruption, with all her graces.

Trust you not then to your pleasures, you great Kings, for their Roses shall wither, and their Thornes endure for euer. Put not your hopes in Riches, since they are of earth as well as you. Despise you Honours since all glory is due to Vertue only. And you, my Dames, employ from hence-forth all your cares and labours, to decke your Soules, rather then your bodyes, if you wil haue Angels enamoured, and men to be emulous, of you. For so euery one shal striue for glory, to imitate you in this glorious enterprize. This is the counsayle I giue you; and with it, will I finish my Booke.

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The end of the ſweet Thoughtes of Death.

THOVGHTS OF ETERNITY:

Distributed into foure Parts.

To wit { The Triumph of Death. / The Ioyes of Paradise. / The Infernall Paynes. / The Houre of Death. }

VVritten in French, by Sieur de la Serre: *& translated into English.*

Permissu Superiorũ, M. DC. XXXII.

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THOVGHTS
OF
ETERNITY.

THOVGHTES OF Eternity.

The Triumph of Death.

O HOW ſweet is it, to thinke continually on eternall things! All flies away before our eyes, & in the courſe of their flight by little and little, lyfe eſcapes away from vs. The Sunne doth well to riſe euery day anew; the moments of its Reigne are meaſured within the order of Nature; It muſt of neceſſity follow the decay of time, wherof it is the dyall; and after it hath preſided to all the vnhappy accidents heere beneath, it lends the light of its torch at laſt to its proper ruine. Though the ſtars of the night

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appeare thicke in the Heauens, with the ſame aſpect, alwayes glittering in wonders, yet can they not chooſe but wax old; euery inſtant robbes them of ſomewhat of their durance, ſince they ſhine within Tyme, for not to ſhine within Eternity. Though the heauens, being quickned by the ſoueraigne Intelligẽce of the *Primum mobile*, renew their paces euery yeare within the round ſpaces of their Circles, their turnings yet are counted; and though they returne agayne by the ſame way, they inceſſantly approach to the point that is to termine their Courſe.

The Fire which entertaynes it ſelfe in its Globe, inſenſibly deuoures it ſelfe; for that Region of its dwelling is a part of the body which conſumes it ſelfe. The Ayre, that takes vp all, yet can not fill vp the voydneſſe of the Tombe which the laſt inſtant of tyme prepareth for it. Though the Phœnix-King of its ſubiects find a ſecond Cradle within its firſt Sepulcher, yet at laſt another ſelfe, ſhall aryſe againe from its Aſhes, though yet vnlike, ſince it ſhal not haue the ſame power to communicate the ſame vertue to the *Species* of its of ſpring. So as it ſhall dye at laſt through ſorrow of its ſterility. Though the Serpent ſhift the skinne neuer ſo much, yet doth its Prudence ex-

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tend no further, whiles Age fals a laughing at its cunning, in deuouring vp its being.

The Trees that do euery yeare waxe young agayne, continually grow old. The Spring, the Summer, and the Autumne, are of force indeed to make them change the countenance, but not their Nature: and the Brookes affrighted with this continual viciſſitude, go flying into the boſome of their Mother, belieuing they are ſhrowded but in vayne: for the Ocean carryes their Wracke within the valley of its waues. The Seaſons growing from the end of one another, as the day from the end of night, ſhalbe diſioyned, and ſeuered by a new Seaſon, which with it ſhall bury all the others. The fayreſt mayſter-peeces of Art, foraſmuch as they are layed vpon the ground, pay cotinuall homage to the ruine of Tyme, as he that preſides within his Empire: witneſſe thoſe wonders of the world, which ſubſiſt no more then in the memory of men, for a ſigne onely of what the famous *Athens*, the triumphant *Carthage*, the proud *Troy* haue beene heeretofore, they are now buryed ſo deep in their ruine, as one can hardly belieue they haue euer beene. They go ſeeking thē in hiſtoryes, but the memory of their raigne is ſo ould, as they are no other wiſe found,

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then in Fables only.

Let vs ſpeake of diuers People rather thé of Townes. That great world of men which the Earth hath borne a thouſand tymes on its boſome, and the Sea vpon its waues, was drowned at laſt in the riuer of *Xerxes* teares, for which he prepared a tombe an hundred yeares before. The Kings haue followed their ſubiects in this common ſhipwrack, & all the Pourtraits of *Apelles*, and the Statues of *Lyſippus*, & of *Phidias* haue runne like hazard with them by this inuiolable neceſſity, that the ſhadow euer followes the body. Well might *Alexander* cauſe himſelf to be ſurnamed *Immortall*, but yet purchaſt not Immortality. He tooke the paynes to ſeeke out another world, and in the midſt of his Triumphes had need of no more, then ſeauen foote of earth to be buried in.

Cyrus would fayne haue it belieued, that he was *Inuincible*, yet could Death know wel how to find the defect of his Armes, like as that of *Achilles*. *Nero* would needs be adored; but he was ſacrificed in punishmēt of his crime. *Creſus* the richeſt of all men carried nothing into his Tōbe, but this only griefe of hauing had ſo much Treaſure, & ſo little Vertue; his riches exempted him not a whit from the euils wherof our life is full, and at the

the end of his terme he dyed as others, with the Pouerty incident thereunto. *Cesar*, *Pyrrhus* and *Pompey*, who had so many markes of *Immortality*, had the worse sort of Death, since they al three were vnhappily cõstrayned to render their lyues to the assaultes of a most precipitous Death. The which doth let vs see very sensibly, how things that seeme to vs most durable, do vanish as lightning, after they haue giuen vs some admiration of their being.

The wise men, as well as the valiant (all slaues of one and the selfe same fortune) haue payed the same Tribute to nature. *Plato*, *Socrates* & *Aristotle* may well cause a talke of them, but that is all; for with their learning they haue yet beene ignorant of the Truth. They haue loued their memory a great deale more then themselus, following a false opinion for to please that of others, wherewith they were puffed vp in all their Actions. They are passed away notwithstanding, and their diuine Spirits haue neuer beene able to obtaine this dispensation of the Destinies to cõmunicate their diuinity to bodies which they haue viuified: so as there is nothing left of them, but a little dust, which the aire and wind haue shared betweene them.

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The ſeauen Sages of *Greece* are dead with the reputation of their worldly wiſedome, which is a Folly before God. They were meere Idolatours of their wordly Prudẽce, which is a Vertue of the phantaſy, more worthy of blame, then prayſe, when it hath but Vanity for the obiect. As many Philoſophers as haue ſtudied to ſeeke the knowledge of naturall things, without litting the eye a little higher, haue let their life runne into a blindnes of malice, and haue left nothing behind them but a ſad remembrance of their pernicious errours.

Let vs ſpeake of thoſe meruailous works wherin Nature takes pleaſure to giue forth the more excellent eſſayes of her power; I would ſay, of thoſe beauties of the world, which rauiſh hearts before they haue meanes to preſent them to them: As of a *Helena*, of a *Cleopatra*, of a *Lucretia*, of a *Penelope*, and of a *Portia*. All theſe beauties truely were adorable in the Eaſt, euen as the *Perſians* Sunne; but in the South the feruour of their Sacrificers began to extinguiſh; and in the Weſt they deſtroyed the very Aultars that were erected to their glory. Their Baytes, their Charmes, & their Attractions following in their Nature the courſe of Roſes, haue laſted but a day of the Spring, they haue vaniſhed with

with the Subiect wherunto they were tyed, nor doth there remaine any more of them, then a meere astonishment of their shorte durance. Thus it is, that the best things run readily to their end: Time deuoures all, and his greedines is so great, as it cannot be satisfied but with deuouring it selfe.

Who were able to number the men to whome the Sunne hath lent its light since the birth of the world, and by that meanes keepe accompt of the proud Cities, of the magnificent Pallaces, whereof Art hath giuen the Inuention to men, to the shame of Nature: the imagination is too seely to reach vnto this But. And yet how great soeuer the Name therof be, the shadowes of their bodies appeare no more to the light of our daies; the steps of their foundations, and the memory of their being are buried within the Abysses of Tyme, and nothing but Vertue can be said to be exempt from Death. All things of the world hauing learned of Nature the language of change, neuer speake in their fashion, but of their continuall vicissitude. The Sunne running from his South to its West, seemes to preach in its lãguage nothing els vnto vs, but this cruell necessity, which constraynes it to fly repose, and to cõmence without cease, to warpe the light-

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ſome webbe of dayes, and length of Ages, I admire the *Ideas* of that Philoſopher, whiles he would mantayne that all created thinges do find their beginning within the concauity of the Moone, without doubt the inconſtancy of this Starre afforded him thoſe thoughtes, ſince euery thing ſubſiſting heer beneath, is ſubiect to a continuall flow and ebbe.

The Heauens tell vs, in running round their circles, how they pull all with them. The Starres illumine not the night, but to the comming of the laſt, which is to extinguiſh their light. The Elements, as oppoſits, reygne not but within the tyme of the truce which nature afforded them, ſince the ruine of the Chaos; and their emnity therefore is yet ſo great, as they are not pleaſed but with deſtructiō of all the workes they do. If they demaund the Rockes & Foreſts what they are doing, they will anſwere, they are a counting their yeares, ſince they can do nothing but grow old. The fayreſt Springes, and the youngeſt Brookes publiſh aloud with the language of their warbles, and of their ſweet murmur, that euery thing in the world inſeparably purſues the paces of its Courſe; yea the Earth it ſelfe which is immoueable, as the Center where all concludes,

des, being not able to ſtirre, to fly far from it ſelfe, lets it ſelfe to be deuoured by the Ocean, the Ocean by Tyme, and Tyme by the ſoueraygne decrees which from all Eternity haue limited its durance.

S. Auguſtine endeauouring to ſeeke out the ſoueraigne God within Nature, demaũded of the Sunne, if it were God; and this Starre let him ſee, that it borrowed its light from another Sun without Eclypſe, which ſhined within the Bower of Eternity. He made the like demaũd of the Moone, whoſe viſage, alwayes inconſtant, made anſwere for it, and aſſured this holy Perſonage, that it had nothing diuine, but light, within it, which yet it held in homage of the Torch of day. He enquired of the Heauens the ſelfe ſame thing, but their motion incompatible with an eſſence purely diuine, put him out of doubt.

How many are there ſeene of theſe feeble ſpirits who ſeeke the ſoueraygne God within Greatneſſes? but what likelyhood is there to find it there? Thrones and Empires ſubſiſt not, but in the ſpaces which Fortune affords them; her bowle ſerues them as a foũdation. Alas! what ſtability can we eſtabliſh in their being? Crownes haue nothing goodly in them but the name only; nor rich

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but apparence: for if they knew how much they weighed, and if the number of cares & thornes which are mingled with the Rubies & Pearles wherwith they are enriched could be seene, the most vnhappy would be trampling them vnderfoot to auoyd the encounter of new misfortunes. Kings and Princes are well the greatest of the Earth, but yet not the happiest; for that their Greatnes markes their ruyne in their Eminency, and the Lawes of the world persuade vs to belieue, that great Misfortunes are tyed to great Powers.

Whence it is that great Monarches do neuer seeme to resent little dolours, nor suffer any thing with feeble displeasures. The least storme with comes vpon them, is a kind of shipwracke to their resentments; all their wounds all mortall, they cannot fall but into precipices; and the crosses of their Fortune make them to keep company with *Iob* on the dungill. Let them tread Cloth of Gould vnder their feet, as *Tiberius* did; let them satiate their hunger with pearles as did *Marke-Antony*; let them metamorphize the seelings of their Pallaces lyke to a starry Heauen, as *Belus* King of *Cyprus*; and with the help of Art let them hold the seasons at their becke for their contentments, as *Sardanapalus*:

napalus: notwithstanding needs must these Magnificences, and these Pleasures vanish before them in an instant, to let them see the weakenes of their Nature, since the inconstancy of Time is annexed to all that which subsists heere beneath. In such sort, as their Greatnesses, and delights do insensibly glide away with life; & though their reigne hath beene ful of flowers, the remembrance thereof brings forth but thornes.

If Kings establish the foundation of their greatnesses vpon their Crownes, let them cast their eyes vpon their figures, round & euer mouing, and thereby shall they know the instability thereof. And then besids, it is no great matter to be able to commaund a world of people, if they make their lawes absolute, through force of Reason, rather then that of Tyranny. There is a great deale more honour to merit a Crowne then to possesse it, which made *Thales Milesinus* say that a vertuous man enuoyed all the riches of the world, if vertue be the greatest treasure of it. So that if they trust in their Scepters to defend themselues from the strokes of Fortune, they consider not the while she is able inough to snatch them out of their hands, and cruell inough to metamorphize them into a sheephooke, and to reduce them

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to ſuch a ſtate, as ſhall moue Pitty rather then Enuy.

What vanity were it for one to haue a Scepter in the hand, and a Crowne vpon the head, if with all theſe markes of Greatneſſes he approches to the Tombe, to bury vp the Glory of it? What pleaſure to ſee the greateſt part of the world to be vnder him, if they haue altogether the ſelf ſame way of Death? The great ones run as ſwift as the little, in this carriere, where Miſeries & Misfortunes accompany our ſteps. How is it poſſible, that man which is but duſt & aſhes, can find aſſurance in Greatneſſes? Ah! What ſay you then, is it not well knowne that duſt and aſhes are ſo much the more ſubiect to be carried away with the wind, as they are ſet in a higher place? The Mountaines are alwaies enuironed with precipices, and thunders neuer turne their faces, but to the higheſt tops. So as, they who apprehend a Fall, ſhould clip the winges of their Ambition, for not to fly too high. But if one would ſeeke for Greatneſſes, it were neceſſary to be in vertue. The Magnificences of *Darius* his Army ſerued but as a funerall pompe to his Death. The Preparations to his Triumph were the inſtruments of his Ouerthrow. In ſo much as the Lawrels of his Hopes crow-

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ned him not, but in the Tombe, in signe that in dying he had vanquished all the mishaps of his life. So do we see the Glory of the world to fly before our eyes with such swiftnes, as we can hardly follow it, throgh the amazement wherein she hath left vs.

I admire the last thoughts of *Celadine*, when as he ordayned, that after his Death they should cause his shirt to be shewed to the whole Army, and that he who carried it should cry aloud, *Behould heere that which the greatest of the world seems to carry from the world.* This valiant Captaine knew the verity of his miseries by the vigill of his Shipwracke, seeing that of all his Treasures he could carry away with him but the valew of a Shirt. This is the share of the greatest Kings. Nature thinks good to afford them Scepters in the cradle, & she must rob thẽ in the Sepulcher. And howbeit they are borne as little Gods on Earth, yet sticke they not to dye like other men; so as if they differ in the mãner of lyuing, they are all equall in the necessity of dying.

S. Lewis would rest vpon a bed of Ashes before his Death, to let vs see, that he was but Ashes; yet is it to be considered that the beliefe which he had, proceeded from the diuine Fire wherwith he was inflamed; and resen-

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reſenting in that manner the diuine flames, by little and little he went conſuming of his life; he would become athes vpon aſhes, both throgh loue and humility. *Dauid* did charge himſelfe with a ſacke of Aſhes, to diminiſh the Haſh of his Greatneſſes, and the trouble that poſſeſſed him. The knowledge of himſelfe perſwaded him, to ſerue himſelfe with this cũning, ſhewing forth without, what was within. His Fleſh couered his aſhes for to couer his defects, and he would haue his Aſhes to couer his fleſh, for to diſcouer the miſeries of his Nature.

When I cõſider how the greateſt of the Earth, are of Earth, and that all their Riches, and all their Greatneſſes may not be had but in flying towards the Center of their ruine, where they finiſh with them; I cry out, as that Philoſopher did, how the world is a Body of ſmoke, which the Ayre of Tyme diſperſeth by little and litle: for the eyes behould, quite through their teares, the continuall decay of the beſt obiects, and they can hardly be knowne within their inconſtancy, ſo different are they from themſelues. It is a pleaſure to read the Hiſtories of Ages paſt, becauſe all the wonders which appeare vpon the Theather of their Reigne, are but dreames, and vayne *Idea's* that ſubſiſt not

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but by the opinion of thoſe that will lend credit vnto them. It were in vayne to ſeeke *Rome* at this day within *Rome*, when ſcarce can be found within the Temple of memory, that of the ruine of its Aultars. *Tyber* only which is alwayes a flying, hath remayned ſtable, and permanent. The golden Pallace of *Nero*, the Stoues of *Dioclettan*, he Bathes of *Antoninus*, the Sephizone of *Seuerus*, the *Coloſſus* of *Iulius*, and the Amphitheater of *Pompey*; all theſe proud wonders haue not beene able to reſiſt the encounters of a firſt Age; and the ſecond hath cauſed the day of their ruine to ſpring with it. So as the Labourers, the works, & their proprietaries haue followed the lot of the decay, which was naturall to them. If they enquire what are become of thoſe magnificences of *Cyrus*, thoſe pōps of *Mark-Antony*, thoſe proſperities of *Alexander*, & thoſe greatneſſes of *Darius*; I ſhall anſwere with that Philoſopher, that they haue paſſed away like a waue without leauing any ſigne of their being behind the.

Philip, that great King of *Macedon*, gaue in charge to one of his Pages to awake him euery morning, with the ſweet harmony of this diſcourſe, forſooth, *To remember that he was man*, & by conſequence ſubiect to death. This Generous Prince was afraid to be da-

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zeled by the flaſh of Fortune, and to forget himſelfe in the preſence of his Greatneſſes, which therfore made him toimpoſe this law vpon himſelfe, of muſing euery day on the Miſeries of his condition, for feare leaſt forgetfulnes ſhould conuince him of this vanity, which ordinarily is annexed vnto great proſperities. He ſet open his eares to the ſoũd of this verity, that he, and al his Greatneſſes were nothing els but duſt, and that the cruel neceſſity of dying was continually occupied in building him his Tombe, to bury there with him both his Glory, & his Fortune. *Remember, that you are Man*, ſaid the Page to him, or to ſay better (leaſt yet the name of Man may ſeeme to flatter you) that you are a little Corruptiõ ſhut vp within a skin of fleſh, quickened with a little breath of life, whoſe light may be extinguiſhed with the leaſt wind; you are, notwithſtanding all that, the greateſt of Men, but yet are not your Greatneſſes exempt from Death, nor the Miſeries that forerunne its ariuall.

Remember that you are man, and that your Scepter and your Crowne ſhal not ranſome you from the Tombe. *Remember that you are man*, ſubiect to a great deale more diſaſters, then the Heauen hath Starres, and the ſea Rockes. *Remember that you are man*, that is to

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ſay, the ſhutle-cocke of Fortune, & brought into ſo deplorable an eſtate, as you can afford but matter of Pitty in conſideration of your Miſeries. *Remember that you are man*, to ſerue as paſture one day to the wormes, and as matter to the ayre and wynd for to play with your duſt, as with a ſubiect proper to their ſports. *Remember that you are man*, yet a ſlaue of this ſoueraigne, and abſolute power, whoſe Scepter and Crowne you hold in homage, not knowing the limits of the tyme of your Reigne. *Remember that you are man*; it may be for an inſtant, or els for an houre, or yet for a day; the which ſhould make this remembrance alwaies preſent to you, how your condition is mortall & tranſitory. *You are man*, dying without ceaſe, and running without intermiſſion towards the Tombe, withal things of the world.

This great King was affraid to wander within the Labyrinth of his Greatneſſes, & this feare of his was founded vpon the reaſon of humane weakenes, wherewith we are all borne. He ſaw himſelfe rayſed vpon the higheſt Throne of Fortune, with the power to commaund a world of people as tributaries all of his Authority? His Armes alwayes victorious found no reſiſtance but in ſight of Humility. His enemies enuious of

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his good hap would change both their hatred and their enuy into admiration. So as being accompliſhed with the ſweeteſt proſperities which are found in life, he feared with reaſon the ſhifting of the wheele, and iuſtly apprehended the turning of the Medall; as he was moſt cunning in the knowledge of the maximes of the world, which had taught him by experience, how Tempeſts attend a calme vpon the waters, & on the land griefes do ſucceed contentments. Hence it was, that he tooke ſuch pleaſure in the acmoniſhment of the Page, when as euery morning he ſo made him, to remember that he was Man, & that it was tyme to riſe, to looke into the accidents wherewith our life is full. This great Prince is dead in muſing vpon Death, and he that aduertiſed him ſo, purſued full neere the paces of his courſe. The King, the Scepter, the Crowne, the Riches, the Greatneſſes, the kingdome and all his ſubiects together are vaniſhed frõ our eyes, and are ſlid into the Abyſſes of Tyme, where things that ſeemed moſt durable to vs, are quite buryed.

Nabuchodonozor led the Princes of *Ieruſalem* as priſoners into Babylon, but the layiour, the Priſoners, and the Priſon it ſelfe are ingulfed within the nothing. The Empe-

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rour *Maximilian* cauſed his Coffin to be carried before him, taking much pleaſure to behould the houſe, where he was to make ſo long ſoiourning. Away then with all theſe vayne Greatneſſes of the world, ſince they ſo poſt away like a Torrent, ſince they melt like ſnow, and ſince they paſſe like a lightning. All thoſe, who now are their Idolatours, ſhal one day ſacrifice themſelues with griefe, for hauing runne ſo long tyme after thoſe vayne ſhadowes: for as many as loue them, loue not themſelues; all thoſe who gape after them are enemies of their proper ſenſes, forcing by an extreme Tyranny their wil to run the way of precipices. The ſtaires that ſerue to mount vp by, haue the ſame vſe in deſcending; ſo as from the higheſt top of Thrones & Empires, there is ſeene no other way then that of the fall. By thoſe waies of Greatnes they mount not vp to heauen: the glory of the Earth ſhuts vp its courſe within the earth; whence it comes that the Palmes & Lawrels, which Honor doth prodigally ſhare to men, do fade & wither, how greene ſocuer, in the ſame ſoyle where they began to ſpring.

Well may they reckon vp the Crownes which *Alexander* purchaſed with his combats, but not let vs ſee their matter, ſince all

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is dead with him. They ſpeake much of *Scipio's* triumphs, but that is all; for tyme hath impoſed ſilẽce to the Oracles of al the Muſes that publiſhed his renown. Let them bring forth hardly if they can, vpon the Theater of the world the happyeſt Monarch of the Ages paſt If *Hannibal* appeare the firſt, they ſhall ſeeme to repreſent him, but as after hauing beene Conquerour of a world of men, he was vanquiſhed by his owne vices, and conſequẽtly reduced to ſuch a point of infamy & miſtortune at once, as they talk rather of his defeats then of his triumphs. If *Pompey* appeare after him, they ſhal cõſider how his diſaſters defaced the luſtre of his firſt proſperities. If *Ceſar* come in his rancke, they ſhall marke how the Thornes of his death did wither the Roſes of his lyfe. The great *Pyrrhus* cannot appeare but ouerwhelmed with the burden of his misfortunes, through the blow of a ſtone, or rather by a heape of earth in ſigne that his greatneſſes; and his Tropheys were to be buried in the earth by a relation of the nature of this Element, with that of his Glory. *Nero* may heere appeare with ſplendour during thoſe fiue yeares of his raygne, but ſo remẽbred, as that hauing cauſed his Statues to be adored, he was trãpled vnder foot in puniſhment of this vanity

nity. *Parmenides* enioyed a calme of lyfe, but he found rockes and tempeſts in his Death by the poyſon that was gyuen him. *Peloſidas* was happy in his Spring, in his Summer, & in his Antumne, but the Winter of his old age made him reſent a great deale of more miſeries, then he had taſted pleaſures in his younger yeares. *Marke-Antony* was rayſed to ſo high a degree of Honour, as he ſtood in competecy with his brother-in-Law about the Crowne of the whole world at once; & yet notwithſtanding his miſeries made him an homicide of himſelfe, through a ſtroke of deſpaire. *Maximus* came to the Empire from the loweſt degree of a ſeruile condition, but from the tyme that he was on the ridge of Greatneſſe, did Fortune make him to deſcēd ſo low, by the ſame degrees he mounted vp with, as his Misfortunes had no relation with his Proſperities. Thus paſſeth the glory of the world, leauing a great deale more aſtoniſhment behind, then euer it afforded admiration.

If a great Architect ſhould ſeeme to perſwade vs to belieue, that our dwelling houſe were on the point of falling, and that we were in daunger to be buried in its ruines; I would imagine with my ſelfe, we ſhould lyue alwaies in payne, to auoyd the effects

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of his preſages, ſeeking with all ſollicitude the meanes to eſchew thoſe perils. So as if I turne the Meddall, it wil appeare, this tottering, and ruinous houſe to be nothing els, then that of the world, & wherof that great Architect, who hath layd the firſt foundations, hath affoarded vs the truth of this aſſurance, that it ſhall fall to ruine very ſoone. *The Heauen, and the Earth ſhall paſſe away.* What ſolidity then can we eſtabliſh heere beneath in this ſoyle, as well of Pouerty as of Infamy, ſince it ſhakes vnder our feet through its continuall vitiſſitude? The ruines thereof appeare without ceaſe before our eyes, & in the courſe of its deficiency, our life purſues the ſame way. And neuertheles with what blindnes do we fall a ſleep, in the ſhip of our delicioufnes, not conſidering how it floats vpon the ſtormy ſea of the world, as abundant in ſhipwrackes as the land of Miſhaps. We muſt neuer turne away our eyes from the obiect of Inconſtancy, ſince it is naturall to all that which hath ſubſiſtence heere beneath. The Monarchy began with the *Aſſyrians*; It paſſed to the *Perſians*; from the *Perſians* to the *Macedonians*; from the *Macedonians* to the *Romanes*, and at this day the Empire is in *Germany*. In ſo much, as after that this ſo famous, and illuſtrious a

Crowne

Crowne, ſhall haue run through the foure corners of the earth, it ſhall reſolue into earth, following the courſe of thoſe that ſhal haue poſſeſſed the title, eyther by right of hazard, or by the right of Birth. So as, *if Heauē & Earth do paſſe*, whatſoeuer ſhall beare the image of the creation, is cōprized within this reuolution of Ages, where all concludes in a laſt end. There is nothing ſo great in the world, as the Hart which contemnes all Greatneſſes. Tyme, as Mayſter of all which is in Nature, lets forth Crownes and Scepters to Kings; to ſome for a day, to others for a moneth, to ſome others for a yeare, and to others for more; but after the terme is expired, it giues no more dayes; one ſucceds in the place of another, vnder one and the ſelfe ſame Law of condition. Let the infinite number of Kings heere preſent themſelues that haue raygned vpon Earth; and if euery one hath had his Crowne, it may likewiſe be ſayd, that ech hath had his Tombe.

Then ſeeke not Greatneſſes, my Soule, but in vertue, and in the glorious contempt of things of the Earth. Thou ſeeſt how Magnificences haue not charmes but for a day, their glittering fadeth with their light, and what foundation ſoeuer they haue, they

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carry in their being the Neceſſity of their ruine. To what end ſhouldſt thou raiſe thy Ambition vpon Thrones, if they be States of vnhappines, and inconſtancy? Enuy not Kings, their Crownes, nor Scepters, ſince it is the title of a tranſitory glory. Felicity cõſiſts not, for to rule with Empire, but rather to find repoſe of life in the condition wherin he is borne. And what more ſweet repoſe can one looke for, then that of deſiring nothing in the world? This is a pleaſing paine to be alwayes in vnreſt, to find that ſoueraigne good which we ſeeke for; I would ſay that Eternity, where delightes are durable in their exceſſe. When thou ſhouldſt be exalted aboue all the Greatnes of the Earth; what happines, and what contentement would be left thee, ſince the Tyme of their poſſeſſion glides without reſpit, with the pleaſures wherewith they are quickned: In ſuch ſort as if at the riſing of the ſunne thou receyueſt Sacrifices in homage, at the ſetting thou ſhalt find thy ſelfe ſtript by Fortune, or by Death. Fixe not thy thoughts then, but on the obiects which hould touch with Tyme; nor ſeeke thou euer to runne after things that fly away. Thy immortall nature cannot eye but Eternity; ſigh then inceſſantly after its Glory, if thou wilt one day haue

haue it in poſſeſſion.

There be ſome who ſeeke their repoſe, & all their pleaſure in Riches, as if Gould had this Vertue to eternize their contentments. *Set not thy hart vpon things of the world*, ſaith the Apoſtle. When the Poets would ſpeake of Riches, they put before vs the Gould of the riuers of *Hebrus*, and *Pactolus*, to let vs ſee how they fly away from our eyes, as the waters. Put caſe a man ſhould poſſeſſe all the treaſures of the earth, yet ſhould he not ſeeme to be richer awhit for all that, ſince he were but the guardian, and not the owner of thoſe treaſures. Riches conſiſt not in poſſeſſing much, but rather in contenting ones ſelfe with a little. *Creſus* could neuer ſatisfy his couetous deſire during his life, which induced his enemies to fill his Body with the gould wherewith he could not fill his Soule. What Folly to ſeeke Eternity in Riches, where is ordinarily found but Death. This very man heere made accompt to ſtuffe his Coffers with Gould & Syluer, & knew at laſt, that his Treaſures were ſo many fatall Inſtruments that ſerued for nothing but to take away his life; ſo as being deceiued in his hopes, he became ſollicitous to conſerue very charily the meanes of his loſſe, & of his ruine. He therfore that goes to ſeeke

for

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for the Riches of the Eaſt, puts himſelfe to the mercy of the waues; and in ſeeking the repoſe of his life approaches ſo neere to Death, as he is diſtant from it no more than the thicknes of the ſhipboard. What feebleneſſe of humane Spirit, to put in hazard whatſoeuer one holdes moſt deere on Earth, for the purchaſe of a little Earth! I had rather a great deale be *Iob* on the dunghill, then *Creſus* on the woodpile; for the one flouted at Fortune in his miſeries, and the other had recourſe to *Solon*, to repent himſelfe for not hauing followed the way of Pouerty, rather then that of Riches, ſince the latter led him to Death.

Crates the *Theban* conſidering that he floted without ceaſe within this vaſt ſea of the world, deſpiſed Riches, for feare to ſuffer Shipwracke with ſo heauy a fraight. The Wheele may well run about, but can neuer get forth of the lymits of its Circle: ſo lykewiſe man may well trauayle, & runne ouer the world to heape vp treaſures, but he fetches the turne only of the Circle of his lyfe the while; of neceſſity moſt the Ship be landing at this laſt port of the Sepulcher, where he finds himſelfe as poore, as when he entred into the cradle. I know not for whom

whome the Richman trauayles, for before the iourney of his trauayle be finished, his dayes are runne out, and being on the point to reape the fruite of his passed paines, death gathers those of the repose of his lyfe. The Mercinary soules who lend forth their conscience to Interest, insteed of their Money, sell, as in told Coyne, the portion they pretend in Heauen, for a little Earth. Blind as they be, they spin the web of their captiuity, & forge the Armes which are one day to reuenge the enormity of their crymes. Abused soules! they consider not how all the Gould of the world is yet now in the world howbeit the greatest part therof hath beene possessed by an infinite number of Mortals, and so shall leaue them behind them as others, how rich soeuer they be now, without carrying ought els into the Tombe, but griefe for not hauing made so good vse of them, as they should.

To what point of misery, was reduced the impious Richman of the Ghospell in a moment, after he had possessed an infinite number of Treasures? He behoulds himself in estate of begging a drop of water for to quench his thirst. To what end serued all his pleasures past, but to augment his present paynes? He employed his Riches to purchase

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chaſe Hell, and all his goods to gayne the euill he endures. O humane Folly! To put ones ſelfe in hazard to looſe Eternity for enioying of a fading Treaſure! Good is not good, but as permanent; and yet looke they after tranſitory delights, that ſubſiſt not but in flying. Demaund they of *Cyrus*, what hath he done with all his Riches, & he will anſwere, he hath left them in the ſoyle that brought them forth. *Xerxes* hath enioyed thē as well as he, and as he, ſo hath he borne no part thereof into his Sepulcher. They may cauſe monuments to be built to their Memory, but Tyme that deuoures all, hath wrought new Tombes, for their Tombes; in ſuch ſort, as if yet there be memory of their death, it is but onely by reaſon of their lyfe. They make a queſtion, which of the two was more rich, eyther *Alexander* or *Diogenes*, the one whoſe Ambition could not be bounded with the whole extent of the Earth; and the other whoſe deſire & hopes were ſhut vp in the ſpace of his Tub. For me, I do hould with *Diogenes*, ſince he is the richeſt who is beſt content.

I could neuer yet imagine the pleaſure which *Caligula* tooke to wallow vpō Gold; for if the luſtre of that mettall, contented his eyes, he might haue beheld himſelfe a far

of,

of, since the eye requires a distance proportioned to the force, or feeblenes of its lookes; but deceaued as he was, he considered not the while how this Gould, & He, differed not awhit, but only in colour, since they were both of Earth: And in effect they can not authorize its pleasure, but through the relatiõ which was there of the nature of the one, with that of the other. The Poets represent to vs how the Goulden fleece was guarded by a Dragon, lyke as the Goulden Aples of *Hesperides*; and the Morall which may be gathered from these Fables, is nothing els but the danger, and payne which is inseparable from the conquest of Treasures.

The Historians obserue, that in all the Countries where this mettall abounds, the inhabitants are so poore, as they haue scarse a ragge of linnen to couer their nakednesse withall. What may we imagine in contemplation of this Verity, but that all the Gould of the Earth cannot tell how to enrich a mã while the riches of the world are borne and dye in a pouerty worthy of compassion? Then seeke not, my Soule, other Riches, then those of Eternity. Thou canst not tell how to buy heauen withall the gold of the earth; and without the enioying of its felicities,

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cities, all goods are counterfait, & al Sweetneſſes but full of Bitternes. Imagine thee now to lyue vnder the Reigne of a goulden Age, and that through an exceſſe of Fortune thou treadeſt vnder foot all the Pearles of the Ocean, and all the goulden harueſt of the Indies. And not to looſe thy ſelfe in this imagination, conſider the eſtate of this felicity, & taſt in conceyt, a part of the pleaſures which thou wert to poſſeſſe, if effects ſhould anſwere to thy thoughts, and then boldly confeſſe with the Wiſeman, how all theſe tranſitory goodes are treaſures of Vanity, & that in the iuſt pretenſions thou haſt to an Eternall glory, all theſe atomes of Greatnes can ſetue thee no more, but for obiect of thy contempt.

Suppoſe thou wert the abſolute Miſtreſſe of the world, what good couldſt thou hope for in the fruition therof, if all be replete with euils? Crimes haue Temples there, & Vices haue Aultars. All the Idolls are of goulden Calues, and ſuch as make profeſſiō to follow Vertue, are within the order of a malady of a contagious Spirit, according to the common opinion. So as, through a Law of Tyme, the moſt laudable Actions are ſubiect to reproaches. Leaue then all the goods of the Earth to the Earth, ſince thou

art

art not borne for them, & ſeeke as a pledge in the ſweet thoughtes of Eternity, for the accompliſhmẽt of thy delightes. The world is not able to ſatiate thy deſires, ſince it hath nothing in it, that is not tranſitory. And howbeit, it be ſuſteyned in its inconſtancy, it leaues not to wax old in changing, & to ruine it ſelfe by little and little, in ruyning all things. Thinke neuer then but of Eternity. Speake not but of Eternity. Let thy deſires, and thy Hopes regard but Eternity. Let alwayes Eternity be in thy memory, & the contẽpt of the world within thy hart. If thou beeſt capabel of *Hatred*, be it but for the Earth; and if thou beeſt capable of *Loue*, be it but for Heauen, ſince it is the manſion of Eternity.

There are others who ſeeke their contentment in magnificent Pallaces as if they were ſhelters of proofe, againſt diſaſters and misfortunes. *Charles* the VIII. tooke pleaſure to build very proud Fabrikes, as belieuing it may be, to cloſe his eyes in dying, through the Splendour of their wonders; but his lot, an Enemy of his hopes, ſnatched away his laſt breath; being ſound of health, vpon a ſtraw bed, and in place encompaſſed round with Miſery. *Heliogabalus* likewiſe was deceiued of his purpoſe, for being on the point

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when the 'enormity of his Crymes had paſſed ſentence of his Death on behalfe of the Gods, he ſhuts himſelfe in the faireſt hall of his Pallace, and prepares for his Enemies all the Richeſt inſtruments of Death he could recouer, as thinking to ſweeten the bitternes thereof with ſo goodly armes: but his foreſight was vnprofitable, for the Gods permitted, that as he had taſted the ſweeteſt pleaſures of life, he ſhould feele in Death the cruelſt dolours. *Hermenides* had, to much purpoſe ſurely, cauſed very ſtately Pallaces to be erected in the dominion of his Empire, ſince he was to dy in his Charriot, as in a rouling Houſe that ſhould conduct him to his Tombe. That famous Temple of *Salomon* was twice ruined by the *Aſſyrians*, then reedified by the Iewes, and againe was ruined by the Romanes. And after that *Traian* had cauſed that Magnificient Bridge to be built vpõ *Danubius*, the waues neuer left roaring vntill ſuch tyme as they had buried in their boſome the laſt marke of its being. Theſe Piramids of Egypt which with their ſharp points ſeemed to outface the Heauens haue beene quite ouerthrowne by tyme, within ſuch an Abyſſe of ruine, as they put them now in the rancke of dreames, and fables.

Beſides

Beſides, it ſeemes in all theſe magnificēt *Fabrikes* how Art & Nature contribute but a backewardnes. The Stones and Tymber are made to be dragged by force, and if they lend but eares to the puſhes of this cōſtraint, they ſhall marke how the waggons that beare them, and the Engines which ſuſteine them, ſeeme to grone vnder the burthen, as if they complayned of their Folly. I eſteeme a farre greater pleaſure to dy vnder the rooſe of a Cottage, then vnder the fret-worke ſeeling of a Pallace, becauſe in that they cannot be touched with griefe to abandō the dwelling, and in this place, the Riches they admire therein, ſeeme to make vs very ſenſible of the priuation. To what end ſerued the great Buildings which the Queene *Semiramis* cauſed to be erected on the face of the Earth, but for matter of ſhame and confuſion in their Ruine? The Queene of *Saba* had a whole towne for her Houſe, and after her Death, both ſhe, and all her Greatneſſes were encloſed within a little ſpace of a Cubits breadth. What folly to go about to build vpon a Territory, where one lodges not but in paſſing as a Pilgrime? From the tyme we are borue, if we were but capable of Action we ſhould be occupied in making our Sepulcher, ſince Tyme ſeemes to lead vs there-

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unto with an incredible ſwiftnes. So as if the infirmity of building do ſeize & poſſeſſe vs., let vs build Temples to the Glory of him who prepares the Eternity.

What is become of that proud *Babylon*, is it not credible that its onely ruine eternized the name? The *Locrians* built a Temple to the Sun, but the Moone its Siſter being iealous of this Glory, obteyned of the Deſtines the ſentence of it ruine; for during the raygne of the Night, the Ayre, and wind did ſatiate, their hũger with its Aſhes. When I thinke of this dreadfull viciſſitude of Tyme, which alters all things, vnto the point of making vs quite to looſe the remẽbrance of them, I contemne whatſoeuer is preſented to my eyes, and make no reckoning thereof, ſince ſo in a moment the fayreſt obiects change the face. If your firſt Father were now riſen agayne, he would quite forget the world, for a thouſand tymes in an age hath it changed the countenance. Let vs loue the change then in this inconſtant and tranſitory lyfe, and let euery one follow his lot without conſtraynt & without tyranny in the way of vertue, for to arriue at this pleaſing habitation of Eternity.

Man makes greatly to appeare both his vanity, and his Pride in theſe Buildings, where

where he would ſeeme to eſtabliſh, if he could, the foundation of ſome ſhelter, that might be of proofe agaynſt the ſtormes of death. But the crime of his vnknowledgement is ſo enormous a thing, as ſeemes to pull on his head the thunders of Heauen. *Learne thou Earth* (ſayth Wiſedome, ſpeaking of man) *to put thy ſelfe vnder foot, it is thy property ſo to be trampled on: for if thou fleweſt in the Ayre, it could be but as duſt, ſo as thine Arrogancy cannot ſubſiſt but in folly.* If man would conſider without ceaſe to what point he is reduced, his ſpirit would not be able to conceiue but thoughtes of Humility. Before his birth he was nothing; after his birth, he is ſo ſmal as we dare not ſpeake it, for in a word is he nothing but a dunghill, couered ouer with ſnow, where the diſpoſition of corruption prepares a food, and nouriſhment for the wormes: whereof then ſhould he ſeeme to wax proud, whoſe end is pouerty and corruption? So as if he take any vanity at the Suns riſing for the Greatnes he poſſeſſeth, at the ſetting of this Starre, we ſhall all be equall.

Marke attentiuely (ſayth *S. Iohn Chryſoſtome*) the ſepulchers of Dead men, & ſeeke round about for ſome ſignes of their paſſed Greatneſſes. For if thoſe Tombes do ſend

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forth any flath of Magnificēce to thine Eyes, conuey thy Thoughtes thereinto, and thou ſhalt find but corruption. Their ioy is extinct with their life, their pleaſures paſt ouer with their dayes, and all their riches are abiding in their Coffers, for to publiſh their folly touching the vnprofitable care they haue had in heaping them together. They haue left their Pallaces at the firſt terme of their poſſeſſiō without ſo much leaſure only as to accompt with their Hoſt. Earth, that art but Earth, in thy natiuity, Earth in thy lyfe, in Earth the end! wherfore art thou proud, ſince thou art but fleſh in apparence, & putrifaction in effect? I commend greatly the cuſtome of thoſe of the *Molucca's*, who build not their houſes but for the tyme only they imagine to lyue, and ſo dying oblige their children to do the ſame. *Arpilaus* King of the *Medes* had cauſed a very ſtately Pallace to be built, where he would end his dayes: but from the inſtant that Tyme had ſtrooke the houre of his retrait, his enemyes entred into this Pallace, and caſt him forth of the window. *Cleophon* the *Lydian* dyed ouerwhelmed with the ruines of his houſe, and *Iulianus* notes how he had no other tombe. Rid thy ſelfe, my Soule, from theſe vayne ambitions, ſo to lodge in Pallaces, knowing how

how the worms in pledge do harbour with in the houſe of thy body. Thou beholdeſt ſo many goodly Edifices, whoſe Gould and Marble ſeeme to defye Tyme, as not able to deſtroy them, yet within an age they abate their pride and with eaſy paces begin to follow the way of their ruine, reteyning ſomthing of the nature of thoſe workemen. *Iob* had a farre better grace vpon his dunghill, then on a Throne, for what ſpectacle was it to put aſhes & corruptiõ vpon clothofgold? Leaue theſe pallaces to men of the world, who blind with a brutiſh ignoráce do eſtabliſh the foũdation of their pleaſures in thẽ. Thou knoweſt, that death enters euery where, and ſince thy God dyed in a deſert Mountayne, wherein the exceſſe of his Miſery he had not a drop of water to quench his thirſt, ſhut thine eyes to the gliſtering of thoſe guilded ſeelings, and ſuffer not this foule reproach at any tyme to expire vpon flowers, whiles thy Sauiour gaue vp the ghoſt on thorns. Do thou follow him then in his glorious actiõs, & build thee a Temple within thy ſelfe, where ech moment of thy lyfe thou mayſt addreſſe to him vowes thou art to make for Eternity; ſince the goodly Pallaces of his dwelling are of proof againſt the inconſtancy of the world.

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If the imagination could attract to it ſelfe all the obiects in diſtance from it, to repreſent them in an inſtant before thy eyes; how many miſchiefes ſhould we behould? How many Deathes, and how many dying liues? They hould, there is no vacuity in nature, I will eaſily belieue it, ſince miſeries ſeeme to take vp all. This is the accident, ſo inſeparable to man, and which accompanies him to his Graue. Euery one hath his dolours affected in like ſort as his pleaſures are, but ſome ripen as they put forth, and others gather ſtrength in their feeblenes, to eternize their durance. How dreadfull would this Theater of the world ſeeme to be, if one ſhould behold all the Tragedies which are acted therin. *Phirra* quenches her fury with her fathers bloud. *Eumenides* is reuenged of her mother through poyſon. *Curtius* buryes his brother within his cradle. *Perneſius* plucks out the eyes of his ſiſter *Etna*. And *Symocles*, being an enemy to his race, ſets the Pallace on fire where his parents were aſſembled; and I ſhould thinke the fire of his choller was the firſt ſparke of that conſuming fire. *Nero* ſeekes nouriſhment, for to ſatisfy his cruelty in the bowels of his mother; but God permitted the Executioners ſhould hold the place of delinquẽts on the day of their death,

when

when they gaue vp their lyfe to the aſſaults of a thouſand dolours, a great deale more cruell then Death it ſelfe.

Conſider all theſe diſmall accidents, my Soule, which happen euery moment. One is conſumed with fire, as *Pliny*, another is hanged, as *Polycrates*; heere one is caſt downe headlong, as *Lycurgus*; there was another burned with a thunder-bolt, like *Eſculapius*. There haue ſome been drowned in the ſea, as *Marcus Marcellus*. *Curtius* was ſwallowed vp in a bottomeles pit. *Eſchyllus* the Philoſopher had his head cruſhed with a Torteſſe ſhell. *Ceſar* was ſlaine by ſuch as he tooke to be his friends. *Cicero's* head was cut off vpon the boot of his caroch. *Euripides* was deuored by dogs. *Cleopatra* died with the ſting of a ſerpent, or rather with that of her deſpaire. *Socrates* is poyſoned; *Ariſto* dieth of famine; *Seneca* through the point of a launcet. Cold tooke away the lyfe from *Neocles*; *Tarquinius Priſcus* was ſtrangled with a fiſh-bone; *Lucia* the daughter of *Aurelius* dyes with the point of a needle. *Elacea* drownes her lyfe in the ice of a glaſſe of water. *Anacreon* is choked with ſwallowing but the kernell of a rayſin. And *Fabius* the Pretour ſuffered ſhipwracke in a meſſe of Milke, and the encounter with a little hayre was the Rocke he fell vpon. *So-*

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phocles and *Diagoras* dyed of ioy, and *Philemon* with too much laughing, as well as *Zeuxis*. *Fabius Maximus* dyed in the field, as *Lepidus*. I will nor make vſe of the examples of our ages, ſince they are ſo freſh; and it ſufficeth that their memory is as ſad as odious.

Thou ſeeſt then, my Soule, how death diſportes himſelfe with Crownes; Thou ſeeſt how he tramples Scepters vnder foot, & how in the preſſe of the world, his Sith ſpareth not any one. Such a one to day lyues Contented, who to morrow ſhall dye Miſerable. One moment onely ſeuers vs from death and miſhap, there is no other reſpit betweene lyuing and dying, then that of an inſtant, which makes me verily to belieue, that Being, and not Being in man differ not awhit, ſince he lyues not but dying, and moues not but to bound his actions in the Tombe whither he poſtes without ſtop. Earth! Who art but Earth! Earth within the cradle, Earth in the courſe of lyfe, and Earth in the end! Stay a while, and if Time which leades thee will not ſuffer it, conſider in ſo haſting to the funerall, how the Earth goes to ioyne with Earth, and that whatſoeuer is in the world, doth follow ſtep by ſtep, to reſume its firſt forme in the duſt. They would faine haue made *Iob* belieue on his

his dunghill that he had loſt all, and that in his loſſe he was brought to the laſt point of miſery; but I imagine the contrary, for he ſitting on his dunghill, was found to be in his proper heritage: and by how much deeper he was buryed in corruption, ſo much was he the forwarder in the poſſeſſion of himſelfe, *if it be true, that man is nought but mire and durt.*

Let Kings make a ſhew of their Greatneſſes, eyther in feaſts, as *Lucullus*, or in apparrell, as *Tiberius*, or be it in other ſorts of Magnificences, all their inſtruments of glory, are of Earth, and vaniſh into ſmoke as well as they. If the aſhes of Kings and Subiects were mingled together, it were impoſſible to diſtinguiſh the one from the other, ſince they are all of the ſame Nature, and al carrying the face of a like forme. The greateſt Monarches are men for Death. This flaſh of life which ſo dazels the eyes of ſubiects, fades away like the beauty of the roſe at the ſetting of the Sunne. How many Kings haue there beene in the world ſince the birth thereof, and yet were it impoſſible to find out the leaſt marke of their Tombes, whiles ſome are buryed in the Ocean, as *Lertius*; others in the flames, as *Hermaſonus*; ſome heere in gulfes, as *Lentellinus*; & others there in

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in the ample ſpaces of the aire, where their duſt is ſcattered, as that of *Pauzenas* King of the *Locrians*. And of all together can there hardly be griped an handfull of duſt: ſo true it is, they are turned to their nothing.

Ah! how now, my Soule, wilt thou ſee buried with a dry eye, whatſoeuer Nature hath more faire, the Earth more rich, & Art more precious? Wilt thou ſee dye euery moment the ſubiects of thy Loue, or rather a part of thy ſelfe, through the alliance thou haſt made with the body, without abating thy vanity, and humbling thy arrogancy? What expects thou in the world, if all its goods be falſe, and euills true? There is no aſſurance to be found but in Death, nor conſolation to be had, but conſtantly to ſuffer its Miſery. Honours, they are all of ſmoke, Glory of wind, Greatneſſes of Snow; and riches of Water, ſliding from one to another without being poſſeſſed of any. Repoſe is not to be had but in imagination, & pleaſure but in a dreame. The Thornes ſpring continually, and the Roſes blow without ceaſe. Sweetnes makes but its paſſage only heere, and bitternes his whole abode. If this ſoyle do bring forth flowers, they are but of Cares; if it beare fruit, they are but Peares of Anguiſh.

Teares

Teares are heere contiuuall, becauſe the anoyes are alwayes preſent. Ioy is not ſeene but running, and ſadnes makes heere a full ſtop. It is a place where Piety is baniſhed aſwell as Iuſtice; and where Vices reigne, and Vertue is made a thrall. Where the fires of Concupiſcence do burne, and where thoſe of Luxury reduce the chaſteſt harts into Aſhes: whence it comes, that thar great Saint demaunded wings to carry him into the deſert. Hope is heere vncertayn, & deſpayre aſſured. Happines appeareth but as a lightning, and Misfortunes eſtabliſh their dwelling, with Empire. They can deſire nothing heere, but in doubt of ſucceſſe: they can expect nothing, but with feare to looſe their tyme. Felicityes, euen while they are poſſeſſed, do free themſelues by litle and litle from this ſeruitude of being tyed to vs: So as if they deſtroy not themſelues in their ſublimity, time ſnatches them from vs at all houres, and leades vs away with them. What is the world but a denne of Theeues? but an Army of Mutiners? but a myre of Swyne; a Galley of Slaues? A lake of Baſiliskes? and therfore the Prophet ſayth; *ſhall I neuer leaue a place ſo foule, ſo filthy, and ſo full of treaſons and deceipts?*

Needs then, my Soule, muſt thou lift vp thine

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thine eyes to Heauen, ſince the Earth is meerly barren of thy contentments. Thou ſeekeſt the Soueraigne good, and it hath but ſprings of Euill. Thou ſeekeſt Eternity, and whatſoeuer is therein, is but vnconſtancy. Change thy thoughtes; the treaſures which thou ſeekeſt for, are not heere beneath, ſince this is the ordinary manſion of Pouerty and Miſery. The obiects heere moſt frequent, are but Tombes; nor do we euer open our eyes but to ſee them layd open. Our eares are touched with no other ſound then with that of Sights and Playnts. The ſents of our putrifaction occupy the ſmelling; and the gaule of a nourithment, dipt in our ſweat, vnfortunately feeds the taſt of our tongue. So as turne we which way ſoeuer we will, the gulfes, the rockes, the fires, the punithmens, and miſchiefes follow vs, as neere as the ſhaddow doth the body.

Conſider attentiuely, my Soule, the importance of theſe verities, and make thy profit of anothers harme. Repreſent to thee, the horrour and amazement whereto the world was reduced withall thoſe meruailes, at ſuch tyme as the Sunne withdrew from it his light. All thoſe proud buildings ſo enriched with Braſſe & Marble, thoſe famous Temples, where Art is alwayes in diſpute with

with Nature ſtriuing to ſet forth their works, appeare to be no more, but Colloſſus's of ſhaddowes, that ſtrike thine eyes aſwel with aſtoniſhment, as with terrour, during the reigne of darkenes; and imagine how the pourtraite of this horrour, drawes before hād its being from the Originall, ſince in the latter day the world ſhall take vpon it the viſage of horrour, of terrour, and of ruine. Repreſent vnto thy ſelf beſids, in order of theſe verityes, how the ſhadowes which couer but halfe of the earth by reſpits, ſhall very ſhortly be filling vp the ſpace of the whole Circle, according to the decree which hath beene made thereof before all ages. In ſo much, my Soule, as ſince the day muſt end at laſt, quenching its torch within the moſt ancient waters of the Ocean, ſeeke betymes another Sun aboue all the Heauens, that may not be ſubiect to Eclypſes; and whoſe light being alwayes in the Eaſt, may make thy happines to ſhine within his ſplendour, not for a day, for a yeare, or for an age, but for an Eternity.

O ſweet Eternity, with how many delights enchaunteſt thou our ſpirits, while we addreſſe our thoughtes to thee. They may not taſt thy baytes, and not be rauiſhed from themſelues with incomparable contentmēts.

We

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We wander, I confeſſe, whiles we ſeeke thee, but thy Labyrinthes are ſo delicious, as we are alwayes in feare to get forth therof. The harts which are taken with thy loue, without knowing thee, ſigh after thy pleaſurs, & howbeit they haue neuer taſted its ſweetneſſes, but by way of *Idæa*, yet find they no repoſe, but in hope to poſſeſſe them one day. O ſweet Eternity! what feelings of ioy and happines doſt thou breed in Soules created for thy glory! How tedious is the way of this mortall and tranſitory life, to them that liue in expectation of thy pleaſures! They reſemble the Marriner being toſſed with ſtormes & tempeſts, who through teares, meaſures with his eyes a thouſand tymes, in a moment, the humide ſpaces of the waues for to diſcouer the Port he aſpires vnto: for they ſayling in like mãner in this Sea of the world, and continually daſhed with tẽpeſts of misfortunes, do coũt the houres, the dayes and the moneths of their annoyes, in the long pretenſion of landing at the port of the Tombe, to be reborne, from very Aſhes, in the manſion of thy glory.

O ſweet Eternity, what ſenſible repaſts haue thy contentmentes with them! The more I thinke vpon thee, and the more I would be thinking of thee, my Spirit, rapt in

in this diuine Eleuation, is so violently pulled from it selfe, as it liues of no other food, then that of thy diuine thoughtes ! O how happy is he, who establisheth in thee, for an Essay, the foundation of his felicity ! My Soule, if thou wilt be content in the midst of thy pleasures, thinke of Eternity. The onely imagination of its delights, shalbe stronger then thine annoyes. What griefe soeuer thou endurest, imagine with thy selfe, how it is but for a tyme, and that the ioy of Eternity can neuer end. The Fastings the Hayrecloth, and al the sufferances of an austere life can neuer shake thy constancy, if thy desires haue Eternity for obiect. What accident soeuer stayes thee, in the way of thy pilgrimage, lift vp thine eyes to Heauē for to contemplate the Beauty of the mansiō whither thou aspirest. Thou seest, how for the purchase of a little glory of the world men expose their liues to a thousand dāgers, and to possesse one day that same of Eternity wilt thou not hazard thy body, which is nought els, but corruption, to the mercy of torments and paynes?

Consider, my Soule, the instability of all created things, and put not thy trust in the earth, since the waters, snow, & sandes are the foundations therof. As often as the

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meruailes of the world attract thee insensibly to their admiration, breake but the crust of those goodly apparences, and thou shalt see within, how it is but a Schoole of Vanity, a Faire of Toyes, a Theater of Tragedies, a labyrinth of Errours, a Prison of darknes, a Way beset with Thornes, and a sea full of stormes and tempests. That it is but a barren Land, a stony Feild, a greenish Meadow whose flowers do shroud Serpēts, a Riuer of teares, a mountaine of annoyances, a vale of Miseries, a sweet Poyson, a Fable, a dreame, an Hospitall of febricitāts where euery one suffers in his fashiō. Their repose is full of anguishes, and their vnrest is replenished with despaire. Their trauels are without fruit, and their Ioyes are but counterfet; where no content is found aboue a day, & all the rest of the life is nothing els but wretchednes. So as if the euils wherewith it is propled, could be counted, they would surpasse in number the atomes of *Democritus*, who could reckon the maladies of the body, the passions of the Soule, and al the dolours wherwith our life is touched. Now then, if it be true that we dye euery moment, is not euery moment, I pray, a Death to vs?

Let vs go then, my soule, to God, since he

he cals vs; the Sunne lends vs not its light but to ſhew vs the way to him. The Starres ſhine not in heauen, but to let vs ſee the pathes, & trackes therof. So as if the Moone do hide her ſelf frõ our eyes by Interſtitions it cannot be but of choler, as ſenſible of the contempt we ſhew of her light. Let vs go to this holy Land of Promiſe, and paſſe the Red Sea of ſufferance and puniſhments, in exãple of our Sauiour, who with no other reaſon, then that of his Loue, would purchaſe, through his bloud, the Glory he atteyned to. The world can afford vs but Death, Death but a Tombe, and the Tombe but an infinite number of wormes, which ſhalbe fed with our carcaſſe. They runne after the world, & the world is nought but miſery; they do loue then to be miſerable. What blindnes, my Soule, to ſigh after our miſhaps, & paſſionately to cheriſh the ſubiect of our loſſe? Let vs go to this Eternity where the delights, euer preſent, raigne with in the Order of a continuall moment. Let vs get forth of this mouing circle, and breake the chaynes of this ſhameful ſeruitude, whereinto Syn hath brought vs.

Away with the world, ſince whatſoeuer is in it, is but myre and duſt; it is but ſmoke to the eyes, putrifaction to the noſtrills, the

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noyſe of thunder and tempeſts to the eares, thornes to the hands, & ſmart to our feeling. All thoſe who put any truſt therein are vtterly deceyued. All thoſe who follow it, are abſolutely loſt. All thoſe that honour it, are wholy deſpiſed, and all thoſe who ſacrifice to its Idols, ſhalbe one day ſacrificed themſelues, in expiation of their crimes. Beſides, we ſee, how all that know it, do abandon it, for if it promiſe a Scepter, it reaches vs a Shephooke. Thrones are ſeated on the brimme of a precipice; nor doth it euer affoard vs any good turne, but as the vigill of ſome misfortune. Away then with the world, and all that is within it, ſince all its wõders now are but duſt. Whatſoeuer it hath more rare, is but Earth; whatſoeuer it hath more fayre, is but wind. Euery King is no more, but a heape of Worms, where Horrour, Terrour, and Infection aſtoniſh and offend the ſenſes that approch vnto it. *Corruption* (ſayth the Wiſeman, ſpeaking of man) *vaunt thou as much as thou wilt, behould thy ſelfe brought vnto the firſt nothing of thy firſt Being.*

Let vs not liue, my Soule, but for Eternity, ſince it is the true ſpring of lyfe. Out of Eternity is there no repoſe; out of Eternity, no pleaſure; out of Eternity, all hope

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is vayne. Who thinkes not of Eternity, thinkes of nothing, ſince out of Eternity all things are falſe. Let vs behould but Eternity my Soule, as the onely obiect of glory. All flyes away except Eternity: it is it alone, which is able to ſatiate our deſires, and termine our hopes. I will no other comfort in all my annoyes, then that of Eternity. I will no other ſolace in all my miſeryes, then that of Eternity. After it, do I deſire nothing, after it do I looke for nothing. I lyue not but for it, and my hart ſighes not, but after it. All diſcourſes are diſpleaſing to me except thoſe of Eternity. It is the But, and end of all my actions; it is the obiect of my thoughtes. I labour, but to gather its fruits; al my vigils point at the pretenſions of its Crownes. My eyes contemne all the obiects, except thoſe that conuey my ſpirits to its ſweet *Idea's*, as to the only Paradiſe I find in this world. Whatſoeuer I do, I iudge my ſelfe vnprofitable, if I refer not my actions to this diuine cauſe; whatſoeuer I thinke, whatſoeuer I ſay, and whatſoeuer I imagine, all is but vanity, if thoſe thoughtes, if thoſe words, & thoſe imaginatiõs rely not, in ſome faſhion, on Eternity. In fine, my Soule, if thou wilt taſt on Earth, the delightes of Heauen,

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thinke continually of Eternity, for in it only it is, where the accomplishment of all true contentments doth consist.

The

The Glory of Paradiſe.

AFTER that rich *Salomon* had a thouſand tymes contented his Eyes in admiration of the faireſt obiects, which are found in Nature; That his Eares euer charmed with a ſweet Harmony, had deliciouſly taſted in their faſhion, the moſt ſenſible repaſts they are affected to; That his Mouth had reliſhed the moſt delicate meates, where the Tongue finds the perfection of its delight: after, I ſay, he had quenched the thirſt of his deſires in the ſea of all contentments of the world, and ſatisfied the appetite of his ſenſes, in the accompliſhment of the pureſt delicacies, he cries out aloud, *That all was full of vanity*. The Pompe of theſe magnificences may well repreſent themſelues to his remẽbrance,

brance, but he cryes out before it, *That it is but vanity*. His riches, his Greatneſſes, his Triumphes, & all his pleaſures, ſerued him as a ſubiect within knowledge of their Nature, for to exclayme very confidently, that all was full of vanity. What pleaſures now after theſe delights may mortalls taſt? What Riches may they now poſſeſſe, after theſe Treaſures? To what Greatnes may they aſpire, which is not comprized within that of his Empire? To what ſort of proſperities may they pretend, which is not leſſe then his happines? And yet neuertheles after a long poſſeſſion of honours & delights, which were inſeparable to his ſoueraigne & abſolute power, he publiſheth this truth, that all is full of ſmoke, and wind, and that nothing is ſure heere beneath, but death, nor preſent, but miſeries.

Soules of the world, what thinke you of, that you reaſon not ſomtimes in your ſelues to diſcouer the weaknes of the foundation, whereon your hopes are piched? You loue your pleaſures; but if it be true, that knowledge ſhould alwayes precede Loue, why know you not the nature of the Obiect, before it predominate the power of your affections? Agayne, you loue not thinges at any tyme, but to poſſeſſe them. Ah what! &

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know you not, the delights of the world do paſſe before our eyes, as a lightning, & that in their exceſſe, they inceſſantly find their ruyne? you thinke your ſelfe content to day becauſe nothing afflicts you; do you cal that pleaſure to runne after pleaſure? for it is impoſſible for you to poſſeſſe that imaginary contentment, but in running after it, ſince it flyes ſo away without reſting. Let them repreſent to themſelues the greateſt contẽtments that may be receyued in the world, & at the ſame tyme, let all the diuers Spirits, who haue taſted the vayne Sweetneſſes appeare, to tell vs in ſecret, what remaines to them thereof.

Thou Miſer, tell vs I pray thee, what pleaſure haſt thou to ſhut vp thy goulden Earth, within thy coffers, to lend it to the intereſt of thy conſcience, and to make it dayly to increaſe through thy guilty cares, and thy fruitles watches? If the vaine Glory to be accõpted rich, poſſeſſed thee, thou haſt beene neuer ſo, but in opinion, and apparence only, ſince in the ſtate whereunto age now bringes thee, all the Riches thou haſt heaped togeather, and which yet thou art gathering, are fruits whereof thou haſt but the flowers, by reaſon of their frailty. Thou mayeſt carry the key of thy Coffers long

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inough; thou art but the keeper of thy treaſures, and as a meere Depoſitarian thereof; for thy auarice lets thee frō diſpoſing them, and conſequently to gyue forth thy ſelfe to be the true owner of them. If thou couldſt haue any moment of ceſſation in thy folly, I would demaund the reaſon of thy actions, to know where thy hopes do bound, and what glory is the But therof? It may be thou wouldſt dye rich: what feeblenes? knoweſt thou not, thou haſt need but of a ſheet only for to couer thy Miſeryes withall. Haſt thou heaped vp money in thy Cabinets, with purpoſe to erect thee ſome ſtately Monument after thy death? Foole as thou art, thou haſt paſt all thy lyfe without conſidering where thy Soule ſhall lodge after thy death; and thou ſtudieſt now to prepare a houſe for thy body, or rather for the worms, which ſhall gnaw the ſame, as if putrifactiō were ſome rare and precious thing.

If thou haſt a deſire to leaue thy children rich, true Riches conſiſt not but in Vertue onely, & with its ſweet liquour, oughteſt thou to milch their infancy, & to murſe them continually with its diuine nouriſhment. Suppoſe through exceſſe of happines thou gainſt the whole world (a ſport of Fortune) and by a blow of a ſad miſchance,

whereto

whereto thy vices ſhall haue ſmoothed the way, thou looſe thy Soule in the laſt moment of thy lyfe, what glory paſt, what domage preſent? The Reigne of thy Greatneſſes ſhall finiſh ſo; and that of thy paynes ſhall then begin. Verily thou ſhalt haue poſſeſt all the goodes of the earth, but in truth likwiſe ſhalt thou feele therfore all the euills within the order of a diuine Iuſtice, which ſhall make thy dolours eternal. Be thou cõuinced thẽ by reaſon not to follow the way of a lyfe, the moſt vnhappy that euer yet quickned the body, and confeſſe with me how there hath beene but one *Matthew* Apoſtle, whom this vaſt ſea of the world hath ſaued from the ſhipwracke, whereinto the weight of gold & ſiluer went about to engage him. *Bias* deſpoyled himſelfe indeed of all his Riches, but not of all his errours. *Laertius Neuola* puts ouer the right of Maiority to his brother, and conſequently his richeſt pretenſiõs; but in deſpiſing one good he imbraced not the other. Conſider I pray to what point of pouerty was the Richman brought vnto in an inſtant, ſince of all his Riches, there was not left him meanes to buy a drop of could water, to quench his thirſt.

Confeſſe then, Miſer, thy pleaſures to be falſe,

falſe, and how they ſubſiſt not in thy ſpirit, but through a deceiptful opiniõ that blindes thee, to caſt thee into a pricipice. The keeper of a Vineyard that reſembles thee, without imitatiõ of thee, is a great deale more happy then thou art, for after he hath ſtirred the earth, he gathers at the end of his daies-worke, in the repoſe a ſweet ſleepe, the fruit of his paines; and thou on the contrary, the thornes of thy thornes, ſince an eternal torment ſucceds the dolours of thy dying life. So as Couetous men in ſeeking of gould & ſiluer, in the bowells of the earth, find hell without piercing into it, which is the Cẽter therof. Thou proud and ambitious Man, tell vs, I pray thee, what are thy pleaſures? I know well how thy Spirit full of vanity pitches thy hopes vpon the higheſt Throne of Fortune, & that blind in the knowledge of thy faults, thou findſt no glory, which is not far beneath thy merit. But wherin conſiſts thy Contentment, if it be to expect Thrones, and attend to Crownes? Did one euer ſee a feebler pleaſure, ſince the nature of it is nothing els but wind and ſmoke? Thou trampleſt the Earth with a diſdainfull foot, as if thou hadſt reaſons inough to perſuade vs, that it were not thy Mother. Thou outfaceſt the heauens with an arrogant looke,

and

and the force of thy aſhes is diſperſed in the aire, not being able to fly any higher, Againe, thou makeſt no doubt, that if the Heauens haue found thunder to puniſh the inſolency of the Angels, it were like to want new puniſhments to chaſtize the vanity of men? It may be thou flattereſt thy ſelfe with this vaine beliefe, that being rayſed aboue the common ſort, thou haſt beene formed in ſome new kind of mould, and that thou art ſo diſpenſed with, in this law, condemning vs to the ſufferance of all manner of paines.

Returne I pray thee, from this wandering, and open thine eyes to conſider thy ruine. Thy Pride, and thy Arrogancy are the plumes of the Peacocke, ſuſtayned by two foundations of Miſery, figured by the feet of this Foule. Carry thy head as high as thou wilt, it muſt neceſſarily fall of its pride in declining to the Earth. And if thou letſt thy ſelfe be dazeled with the glittering of thy ſumptuous Apparell, this verity conuinceth thee of folly, ſince all thou weareſt, is but the worke of wormes: nor do I wonder now, that they deuoure vs ſo, after death, for it is but to pay themſelues for the paynes they haue taken, in laying the web, wherewith we couer our nakednes. So as, if thou regardeſt thy ſelfe neere, thou ſhalt

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ſee how the wormes of thy apparell, couer thoſe of thy body; & that therefore thy Arroganey hath no other foundation, then that of thy corruption. And vpon this aſſurance tell me now, what are the delights of thy vanity?

And you great Monarkes, who find the Earth too little to bound, within its ſpaces, the extent of your Empire, do you, I pray, make vs participant of your Contentments, and tell vs ſomething of the Sweetneſſes which you taſt, during the raigue of your abſolute powers. It is a pleaſure, you will ſay, to commaund a world of people, & to impoſe thē lawes after your owne humour. A feeble Pleaſure! Whiles it proceeds, but from a Soueraignty which ſubiects the ſpirit of him that commaunds; becauſe indeed he ought to correſpond with the actions of his Subiects. You do what you will your ſelfe. It is true; but that is not the way to content your ſelfe, if your deeds be not exempt frō reproch. If they feare you, it is but for the knowledge they haue of your Tyranny. If they loue you, to what end ſerues the affectiō of your ſubiects, while you ſeeme not to merit the ſame? You go into al places wherſoeuer your deſires call you, without euer meeting with reſiſtance in your deſignes:

but

but why follow you not the path of vertue? Diſpleaſures rather then delights attend you at the end of the Carriere. I know well how Greatneſſes, Riches, and all Magnificences are alwayes in pledge with you; but therein ought you to conſider the while how the glory which enuirons you, ſeemes to fetch the ſame courſe which the Sunne doth, and how it flyes away without ceaſe towards its Weſt, whence it ſhall neuer riſe agayne. Be it ſo, that your lookes ſeeme to aſtoniſh the ſtouteſt, and that they fauour the more happy. Thoſe lookes in their ſterneſſe, cannot wound but the culpable, no-engage in their ſweetnes, but ſpirits which feed of ſmoke.

There is no doubt but your power is admired, but not enuyed of the wiſer, becauſe the greatnes of your might, concludes very ordinarily in vanity. We muſt confeſſe that the honour, & life of men are in your hãds: But you muſt needs confeſſe withall, that your heades alſo, are beneath the Sword, which is faſtened to the ſeeling of Heauen, or rather ſuſpended in the ayre by a little threed, and how the leaſt of your crymes may pul vpon you the chaſtiſement therof. So as, if you take pleaſure to bath you in the bloud of Innoẽccy, as an *Otho*, or a *Caligula*, the

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the diuine Iuſtice prepares your laſt bath in your proper bloud, where your Soule ſuffers Shipwracke with your body. What then are your delights? In what garden do you gather their flowers? Verily you haue all things at your wiſh, but what pleaſure is it to wiſh for tranſitory goods, whoſe priuatiõ cauſeth a great deale more ſorrow, then the fruition afforded contentment? If your Crownes, and Scepters are agreable to you during life, they will cauſe a horrour at your Death; for that you ought to giue accompt of your ſwaying them. You are but Lieutenants onely in the Land of God, during the tyme of your Reigne. The hower approaches wherein you are to iuſtify the Soueraigne actions of all the moments of your life, to know (in truth) in what faſhion you haue diſpoſed of the Greatneſſes, and of the Treaſures, whereof you were no more then meere Depoſitarians. Do you now then referre all your pleaſures to this laſt inſtant, and you ſhall know how the way is a great deale more thorny, then that of a low condition, and voyd of Enuy.

Tell vs I pray thee, *Lucullus*, what are become of the delights of thy proud Feaſts? I admit, that the prodigality of thy Magnificences, hath vnpeopled the ayre of Birds,

and

and the sea of fishes, and that Art hath exposed to view, as in a stall, her last inuentions, to glut the appetite of thy foolishnes. Where are now those contentments? Where is this Pompe, where is this lustre, where are the Pallaces of these banquets, where are the Cupps of Gould, where the Meate, where the Cookes, where are the Stewards, where the Guesse, and the wayters of thy Feasts? All is slid away without their memory. And if the Historyes (*Lucullus*) do yet remember thee, it is but onely to represent thy folly to Posterity. What contentment may they take in feasts, if the sweet wines wherwith they satiate their hunger, be chaunged to corruption? They take pleasure to deuour their pleasure, like as in the Chase they find contentment in running after their sports. The hony which they put into the mouth, becomes bitter in the stomacke: for what incõmodities seeme they not to suffer who haue filled their belly withall the sortes of Meats? And to what shame and infamy submit they not themselues, while they drown their reason in wine, their honour, and their conscience all at once? is it not to be cruell to ones selfe to precipitate his paces to the Tomb-wards, as if we dyed not soone inough?

Againe, for whome take we the paines to treat our bodyes ſo, if not for the wormes, ſince the fleſh is deſtined to them? All the fat which we gather, is but for them, for the ſmall tyme we lyue is not to be put into accompt. Why, conſider they not how euery Banquet, hath its laſt courſe, & euery wedding-day its morrow; and that the ioy of theſe feaſts ſeemes to paſſe away, as ſwift as the day, which lends them light? What a goodly cuſtome was it among the Pagans to ſerue in at the laſt courſe of their Bāquets, an Anatomy vpon the table, in ſigne how the wormes were ſhortly to reduce the bodies of the inuited to that eſtate? How many are there now adayes, who in the blindnes of Epicuriſme put all their Gallantry in making of good Cheere? But what exceſſe of Beſtiality the while to take ſuch pleaſure to pamper the body on the way of death, whither it runs poſting without ceaſe? I graunt thou haſt drowned to day thy Troubles in thy Glaſſes, and haſt glutted thine appetite with meats the moſt delicious of the world: what ſhalbe left thee therof to morrow, but gaule in the mouth frō the ſurfet of thy riot? I ſay, but bitternes in thy hart, & repentance in thy ſoule? Thy Croſſes renew againe more ſtrong then euer, by reaſon of the priuation

uation of thy delighs. Thou muſt begin againe to morrow to ſooth thy ſenſuality, and the day following the ſame tormẽts which thou haſt ſuffered now already, ſhall ſucceed thy ioy. So as when all the lyfe ſhould be a feaſt, the laſt ſeruice thereof were alwaies to be feared, ſince a life of Roſes brings forth a death of Thornes. Cramme then thy body withall ſorts of meats, as long as thou wilt, he that ſhall haue faſted the while, ſhalbe a great deale more content then thou, vpon the laſt day of thy Banquets. So as, if thou haſt the aduantage to be fatter then he, the wormes ſhall fare the better for it, in thy graue.

You ſenſles Soules that loue but the pleaſures of the Table, I aduertiſe you betimes that the Feaſt is ended, and the Company brooke vp: ech one is retired with himſelfe. But there is now another manner of news, which is, that many of your Copanions are dead; one, as *Ninus*, with too much drinke; another with feeding ouer much, as *Meſſina*. He there hath fetched an eternall ſleepe, as *Bogrias*; & he heere hath cut his wiues throat in his wine, as *Theſſalius*. To what end thinke you? They are the laſt ſeruices which misfortune preſents at the laſt Courſe of your feaſts, the poyſon whereof is couered with

ſugar; take you heed then, & play not with ſuch formidable Enemies. It is all that you can do to eſchew the dangers in the world, with the light you haue of Reaſon; and you are drowning the ſame in your Banquets, without feare of ſuffering Shipwracke with it.

Away with theſe Pleaſures of ſmoke, which fill not the body, but with new matter of putrifaction, I abhor you, & deteſt you with a hatred which ſhall neuer dy. Since my God hath put Thornes on his head, why ſhould not I be putting them in my hart? I will from henceforth quench my Thirſt within his Chalice, and gather the fruits of my nouriſhment in his deſarts. My Sauiour hath faſted all his life, and ſhall I pamper my ſelfe euery moment? Let death come vpon me, rather then ſuch a wiſh. I loue thee, my Soule too well, to preferre the pleaſures of my Body before thy cõtentmẽt. Take then thy pleaſure in the Thoughtes of Eternity, ſince for thy entertaynement they are able to produce the true Nectar of Heauen, and the pureſt wine of the Earth.

And you, profane Spirits, who ſacrifice not but to Voluptuouſneſſe, confeſſe you now, that *Lazarus* was a great deale more happy in his Miſery, then was the impious Rich-

Richman in his Treaſure. The one dyed of Famine in the world, and the other dyes of Thirſt in Hell. Agayne, what a thing were it that all wedding-feaſts ſhould be held on the Sea, where the leaſt tempeſt might trouble the ſolemnityes, & metamorphize them into a funerall pompe? And yet neuertheles is it true, that the ſoules of the world giue themſelues to banquet vpon the current of the water of this life, where rockes are ſo frequent, and ſhipwracks ſo ordinary. One drinkes a dying, to the health of another who drownes in his glaſſe ſome moments of his life; and ſo all, Companions of the ſame lot approch without ceaſe to the Tõbe which Tyme prepares them. O how ſweet it is (ſaid that Poet) to banquet at the Table of the Goddes, becauſe in that of men, the laſt ſeruice is alwayes full of Alöes. But I ſhall ſay after him, what contentments without compariſon, receyue they at the Angels Table? It is not there where the ſoule is repleniſhed with this imaginary ſweet wyne, nor with theſe bitter ſweetneſſes of the world. The food of its nouriſhment is ſo diuine, as through a ſecret vertue it contents the appetite without cloying it euer.

Sigh then, my Soule, after this Celeſtiall

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Manna, alwaies fruittul in pleaſures, ſo ſweet as deſire and hope are alike vnprofitable in their poſſeſſion, if what they poſſeſſe in thē may be imagined to be agreable to them: nor ſuffer any more thy body (ſince thy reaſon may mayſter its ſenſes) to heap on its dunghill, corruption vpon corruption, in the midſt of its banquets and Feaſts, where they prepare but a rich harueſt for the wormes. If thy body be a hungry, let it feed as that of *Iob*, with the ſighes of its Miſery. If it be a thirſt, let it be quenching its thirſt with the humide vapour of its teares, as that of *Heraclitus*. And if it reuolt, let them put it in chaynes and fetters, for ſo if it dy in torments it ſhall be reſuſcited anew in Glory.

Sardanapalus, appeare thou with thy Ghoſt heere, to repreſent in *Idea*, thoſe imaginary pleaſures which thou haſt taken in thy luxuries. O it would be a trimme ſight to ſee thee by thy laſciuious *Elincea*, diſguiſed in a womans habit, hauing a diſtaffe by thy ſide and a ſpindle in thy hand; what are become of thoſe allurements which ſo charmed thy Spirit? What are become of thoſe charmes that ſo rauiſhed thy ſoule? What are become of thoſe extaſies, which ſo made thee to liue beſides thy ſelf? thoſe imaginary Sweetneſſes, thoſe delicious imaginations, thoſe agreable

agreable deccipts, and thoſe agreements of obiects where thy ſenſes found the accompliſhment of their repoſe? Blind as thou art, thou cõſidereſt not a whit, that Time ſeemes to bury thy pleaſures in their Cradle, and euen in their birth; how they runne Poſt to their end through a Law of neceſſity, fetched from their violence. The profane fire wherwith thou waſt burned, hath reduced thy hart into Aſhes, with thy body; and the diuine Iuſtice hath metamorphized the imaginary paradiſe of thy life into a true Hell, where Cruelty ſhall puniſh thee without ceaſe for the cryme of thy luſt. I confeſſe that the Sunne hath lent thee its light during an Age, for thee to taſt very greedily the pleaſures & ſweetneſſes of tranſitory goods. But that age is paſt, the ſweetneſſes vaniſhed, thy pleaſures at an end, and all thy goods, as falſe, haue left thee dying but only this griefe, to haue belieued them to be true.

Brutiſh Soules, who ſigh without ceaſe after the like paſſions, breake but the cruſt of your pleaſures, and cry you out with *Salomon*, how the delights of the world are full of ſmoke, and that all is vanity. He lodged within his Pallace 360. Concubines, or rather ſo many Miſchiefes, which haue put the ſaluation of his ſoule in doubt. I wonder not

awhit that they hoodwincke Loue, ſo to blind our reaſon, for it were impoſſible our harts ſhould ſo ſigh at all houres after thoſe images of duſt, but in the blindnes whereto the powers of our ſoule are reduced. O how a Louer eſteemes himſelf happy to poſſeſſe the fauours of his miſtreſſe! He preferres this good before all thoſe of the earth beſides. And in the Violence of his paſſion, would he giue, as *Adam*, the whole Paradiſe for an Apple, his Crowne for a glaſſe of water, I would ſay, that which he pretends, for a litle ſmoke. He glues the name of *Goddeſſe* to his Dame, as if this title of Honour could be compatible with the Surname ſhe beares of *Miſerable*. He adores notwithſtanding this Victime, and offers Incenſe to it vpon the ſame Aultar, where it is to be ſacrificed. His ſenſes in their brutiſhnes make their God of it; and his ſpirits touched with the ſame error authorize their Idolatry, without conſidering this Idoll to be a worke of Art, couered with a cruſt of Playſter, full of putrifaction, and which without intermiſſiõ reſums the firſt forme of Earth, in running to its end. Would they not ſay now, this louer were a true *Ixion* who imbraceth but the Clouds? for in the midſt of his pleaſures, death changes his Body into a

ſhadow

ſhadow full of dread and horrour, He beleiues he houlds in his Armes this ſame Idoll, dreſſed vp with thoſe goodly colours, which drew his eyes ſo in admiratiõ of her, & he ſees no more of her then the ruines of the pourtraite, where the wormes begin already to take their fees. Away with theſe pleaſurs of the fleth, ſince all fleſh is but hay, & that death ſerues not himſelfe of his Sith, but to make a harueſt of it, which he carryes to the Sepulcher. What Glory is there in the poſſeſſion of all the women in the world, if the fayreſt that euer yet haue beene, are now but athes in the Tombe? All the flowers in their features are faded as thoſe of the Meadowes, and the one and other haue laſted but a Spring. Soules of the world, demaund of your Eyes, what are become of thoſe obiects, which ſo often they haue admired? Aske your Eares to know, where are thoſe ſweet Harmonies, which haue charmed them ſo deliciouſly? make you the ſame demaund of all your other Senſes, and they ſhall altogeather anſwere you in their manner, how their pleaſures are vaniſhed in an inſtant, as the flaſh of a lightening; and that they find nothing durable in the world, but griefe for the priuation of the things which they loued. Admit you haue

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all ſorts of pleaſures at a wiſh; for how long tyme are they like to laſt? It may be a moment, it may be an houre; and would you for a little number of inſtants, be reigning ſo long in your vices?

Thou ſeeſt then, my Soule, how falſe is the Good of Greatneſſe; and that of Riches how imaginary it is. How the pleaſures of Banquets, full of Alôes, dye in their ſpring, and the delights of the fleſh haue no other foundation then that of corruptiõ. It is now tyme, my Soule, that I let thee ſee ſenſibly this difference that is betweene the contentments of the Earth, and thoſe of Heauen, to the end, that in the knowledge of their nature, the one ſo contrary to the other, thou maiſt ſhunne thoſe pleaſures that fly away, & ſigh for loue after the delights of Eternity. There is this difference (*S. Auguſtine* notes) betweene eternall & tranſitory things, that before we poſſeſſe the tranſitory goods, we paſſionately deſire them; and from the tyme we enioy them, we fall ſenſibly to miſlike them. On the contrry, the deſire of eternall things we neuer thinke of; yet from the tyme we poſſeſſe them, we are not capable of loue, but for them. Conſider a little, you Mortals, what this is but an age of pleaſures, whoſe laſt moment ſeemes

to

to make vs forget all the others that went before: in ſuch wiſe, as there reſts but a vayne *Idæa* of the Tyme paſt. Search you ſomwhat curiouſly within the memory of ages, into that of daies, which haue runne away, coũt their houres if you will, and you ſhall confeſſe, that it ſeemes to you to be but yeſterday, ſince our firſt Father was chaſed out of the terreſtriall Paradiſe; ſo true it is, that Tyme paſſeth, and ſwiftly glideth away.

The Sage Roman ſayd; That if to theſe long yeares we adde a great number of others, and of all together make vp a Raigne of a life, the moſt happy that euer yet hath beene ſeene, if we needs moſt deſtine a laſt day, to performe the funerals of all the others, and vpon that day a certaine houre, and in this houre the laſt moment; a great part of our life will go way in doing ill, the greater in doing nothing, and the whole in doing otherwiſe then our duty required. There is alwaies a thirſt of the delights of the world, and though we ſeeme to quench the ſame in its puddle ſprings, yet is it but for a moment; for the heat wilbe renewing againe, and the deſire of drinking will preſſe vs then more then euer. Vntye thy ſelf thẽ, my Soule, from all the feelings of the Earth, and with a pitch, full of loue, eleuate thy

Thoughts

Thoughtes to this ſweet obiect of Eternity. If thou aſpireſt to Greatneſſes, repreſent to thy ſelfe how the happy ſpirits trample vnderfoot both the Sun and Moone, and all thoſe Starres of the Night, whoſe infinite number aſtoniſh our ſenſes. *S. Paul* was but lifted to the third Heauen, and yet neuertheles could he not expreſſe, in his language, the Meruayles which he admired. And *S. Peter* on the Mount *Thabor*, being dazeled through the glittering of one ſole Ray, moſt confidently demaunds permiſſion of his Mayſter, to build in the ſame place three Tabernacles, hauing now quite forgot the Earth, as if it had neuer beene.

Alas, O great Saint, with what extaſies of ioy ſhouldeſt thou be accompliſhed in this diuine Bower of Eternall felicityes, if one feeble reflection of light, ſo rauiſhed thee from thy ſelf, as made thee breath ſo deliciouſly, in a lyfe repleniſhed with clarity, as thou didſt put in obliuion the darknes of the world where thou madeſt thy abode? What might thy Glory by now? To what point of happines might we ſeeme to termine it? Thou poſſeſſeſt the body, whoſe Shadow thou haſt adored; thou behouldſt vncouered that diuine Eſſence, whoſe Splẽdor makes the Cherubims to bow the head,

for

for not being able to endure the ſweet violences of its clarity. Iudge with what feeling I reuerence thy felicity, if the onely throughts I haue of them do make me happy only before hand. The Kings of the world, my Soule, eſtabliſh the foundation of their Greatneſſes vpõ the large ſpaces of the earth, and all the earth togeather is but a poynt in compariſon of Heauen. And therefore the onely obiect they haue in their combats & triumphes, is no other then that of the Cõqueſt of this little point.

Get forth then, my Soule, of its Circumference, ſince thou art able to aſpire to the poſſeſſion, not of the world (for it is but miſery) but of a manſion whoſe extent may not be meaſured, and whoſe delights are eternall. Wouldſt thou haue Thrones? The Emperiall Heauen ſhall be thy foot-ſtoole. Wouldſt thou haue Crownes? The ſame of immortall Glory ſhall enuiron thy head. Wouldſt thou Scepters? Thou ſhalt haue alwayes in thy hand a ſoueraigne power, which ſhall make thy deſires vnprofitable, not knowing what to deſire out of thy power. Haſt thou a deſire to haue treaſures? *Glory and Riches are in the howſe of our Lord:* And not this trãſitory glory of the world which chaunges into ſmoke, but another wholy diuine,

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diuine, that depends not a whit vpon Tyme, and which reaches beyond all ages. Not those riches of the Ocean, nor those of the Land, which are vnprofitable in their vertue, & full of weaknes in their power; but of Riches that haue no price, and which make thee owner of the Soueraigne Good, wher all sorts of felicityes are comprehended. If thou be delighted with Banquets, heare the Prophet what he sayes; *Lord, one day alone affoards more contentment in thy house, then a whole age in the feasts of the world*. The diuine food wherewith the happy Spirits are fed hath not in it selfe only these sweetnesses in quality, but it nature. So as, this is a vertue essentiall to it, continually to produce what soeuer they way imagine in its chiefe perfection. *We reioyce in thee, O Lord, in remembring thy breasts, a great deale more sweet then wine.*

They write of *Assuerus*, that he raigned in in *Asia*, ouer one hundred & twenty seauen Prouinces, and that he made a Banquet in his Citty of *Susa*, which lasted an hundred and fourescore dayes, where he set forth with Prodigality, all the Magnificences which Art and Nature, with common accord could furnish him, at the price of infinit riches. But the end of this Feast did blemish

the

the Glory of its beginning and continuance, for that all the pleasures which dye, are not considerable in their Birth, nor in the course of their Reigne. Hence it is, my Soule, that the only delights of these Banquets, which the King of Kings prepares for thee, are worthy of thy desires, since they shall last for an Eternity. Those there haue begunne vpon Earth, for to finish one day; and these heere shall beginne in Heauen for neuer to haue end. Some are borne, and dye in Tyme; and others are borne in Eternity to endure therein as long as it. Wouldst thou lodge in Pallaces? *The Rich house of our Lord shalbe the habitation of the iust.* But what house do you belieue it is? Represent vnto thy self, that when they enter into the Pallace of some Great Prince, they find the particular seates of all his Subiects, before that of his dwelling. The like is it in this stately Pallace of the Vniuerse, which this Almighty King hath built with a word only, whereal his Creatures make their aboad, as in certaine Tenemẽts which he hath destined to them. The Ayre serues them for a Cage, the Sea for a Fishpoole, the Forrests for a parke, the Champaignes for orchards, the Mountayns for their Towers, and the diuers Villages are as sundry places of pleasure, which

Kings

Kings & Princes hold as tenants of Time.

Walke then boldly, my Soule, within this vaſt Pallace of the world, ſince it is the place of thy dwelling. The ſtarry Heauen is the ſeeling thereof; the Moone the torch of the night, and the Sunne that of the day: the birds learne not to ſing of nature, but to charme thine eares, through the ſweet harmony of their warbling. The *Sunne*, the *Aurora*, and the *Zephyrus* take paines ech one in its turne to cultiuate the Earth, for to helpe it, in the ſhouting forth of its delicate Flowers, from whome beautifull *Iris* hath robd the pourtaite of their colours for to dreſſe vp her Arke, whence it is that thine eyes continually admire it. The trees euer ſtooping vnder the burden of their fruits; grow not but for thy delight. The woods, they people their trunkes with leaues, of purpoſe to make thee taſt the pleaſures of their ſhades, in the chiefeſt of the heats. And the Rockes though vnſenſible, contribute to the perfection of thy contentmẽt a thouſand goodly fountaynes, which with the murmur of their purling, fetch ſleepe into thy eyes, for to charme ſometymes the annoyes of thy life. The Meadowes do neuer ſeeme to preſent themſelues to thee, but with the countenance of Hope, knowing well how it com-

comforts the whole world; & its Champaignes, as witty to deceiue thee, do hide their treasures vnder goulden Cases, to the end to dazle thine eyes through the glittering of so goodly a shew.

And now, my Soule, if in this Pallace where the Subiects of him who hath built the same, do soiourne, thou seest but wonders euery where; to what degree of admiration shalt thou be raysed, when passing further, thou discouerest the dwelling of the soueraigne Maister? Thou needst but mount vp an eleauen steps onely to behold the spaciousnes of the place where is assembled all his Court. Go then faire and softly, because vpon euery step thou shalt be discouering of new subiects of wonder, and astonishment at once. The first step is the Heauen of the Moone, whereby passing only, thou shalt admire the clarity wherewith it is adorned, to giue light to all those that mount, which is noted in the Pallaces of great men, where the Stayer-cases are made very light-some. The Moone presids in the midst of its Heauen, and within its Circle is it alwayes waxing and wayning, where the diuine Philosopher *Plato* hath established the spring of the *Idæa's* of all the things heere beneath; and then consider how in the space of this,

degree might a thouſand worlds be built.

The ſecond Stayre is the Heauen of *Mercury*. The third, the Heauen of *Venus*. The fourth that of the Sunne (names which the Aſtrologers aſſigne vnto the Heauens.) Cõtemplate heere at leaſure, this Stare of the day, whoſe benigne influences do make the earth ſo fruitfull, & whoſe light giues pride to colours, and conſequently the vertue to all beautifull things to become admirable. It was this very Sunne which *Ioſue* arreſted in the midſt of its Courſe, and which the *Perſians* heeretofore haue adored, not conſidering the while it was ſubiect to Eclypſes, & how it borrowed its light, and all its other eſſentiall qualities from a ſoueraigne & abſolute Cauſe, which had giuen it the Being.

The fifth Stayre is the Heauen of *Mars*. The ſixth of *Iupiter*, and the ſeauenth of *Saturne*. They eight Stayre is the Firmament, The ninth the *Primum mobile*. Stay heere a little, my Soule, vpon this Step, for to liſten as you paſſe along to the ſweet Harmony of the mouing of the Heauens, and of al that is in nature; for by the ſwindge of this Heauen, as with a Mayſter-wheele, are all the ſprings of the world moued, and are no otherwiſe capable of actionthen through

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its mouing. But the motion is ſo melodious through continuance, & through the iuſtnes of the correſpondency of all the parts with their ground, as *Plato* that great Philopher was not touched with any other deſire, thē that of hearing this Harmony.

The tenth Staire is the Criſtalline Heauen. Heere it is, my Soule, where thy feeling, and thy thoughts are to be attentiue. This tenth Step is beyond the limits of thé world. Thou beginſt but now, to enter into the Manſion of the Glory of thy Lord, mingle reſpect heere amidſt thy ioy, & ioine humility with thy contentments. Thou beholdſt thy ſelf now illumined with another light, then that of the Sunne & Moone not ſuffering intermiſſion in its durance. It ſhines alwayes, and thou maieſt know in the neere admiration of its diuine Clarity, the price of the delights it communicats to thee. Let vs finiſh our voyage, and mount we now to the Emperiall Heauen, whither *S. Paul* was rapt, & where he ſaw wonders, which had no name; where he taſted Sweetneſſes, whoſe *Idea's* are incomprehēſible; and where he felt pleaſures, whereof his very Senſes could not talke, euen when they had the vſe of ſpeach. But thou mayeſt yet cry with *S. Stephen, how thou ſeeſt the Hea-*

uens open: for now behold thee vpon the laſt ſtep, and at the gate of that great Emperiall Heauen.

It is not permitted thee, my Soule, to enter into a place ſo holy and ſacred; do thou only admire by order, the Porch without, and the infinite greatnes of the miraculous wonders there, whence all the Saints, inceſſantly publiſh the Glory of the Omnipotent who hath wrought them. Contemplate the perfect Beauty of the Angels, ech one in his Hierarchy, that of the Archangels, that of Powers, that of the Vertues, that of the Principalities, that of the Dominations, and that of the Seraphims, with this Aſtoniſhment to behold how in clarity they furpaſſe the Sunne. Admire all the happy Spirits, ech one ſeated in the Throne of Glory which he hath merited, the Virgins, the Confeſſours, the Martyrs, the Apoſtles, the Prophets, and the Patriarches, being rayſed all to the degrees of Felicity, which they haue purchaſed.

Repreſent vnto thy ſelfe beſides, the incomparable happines, wherewith the Immaculate Virgin Mother of our Sauiour, is accompliſhed. Caſt thine eyes vpon her Throne, and euen rauiſhed in aſtoniſhment of her Greatneſſes, publiſh with confidence how

how they are without compariſon, and that the Sun, the Moone, and all the Starres are of a matter to vile, and profane for her to tread vpon. And if thou wilt be caſting thy view vpon the Tabernacle of thy God, do thou ſhroud it from the flaſh of his rayes, vnder the Robe of the Cherubims; and being rauiſhed as they, in the dazeling where they breath accompliſhed withal ſorts of felicityes, adore the diuine Obiect of their Glory. And while thine eyes, ſhalbe taſting, in their faſhion, the delights which are found in the admiration of things perfectly fayre, lend thine eares to that ſweet harmony, wherwith al thoſe happy Spirits make vp a Conſort in ſinging without ceaſe, *Holy, Holy, Holy is our Lord; the Heauens, and Earth are filled with the maieſty of his Glory.*

O diuine melody! How powerfull are thy ſtreynes, ſince through our thoughtes they make thẽſelues ſo ſenſible to our harts! With how many different pleaſures, and all perfectly extreme, art thou rauiſhed now, my Soule! With what rauiſhments of Ioy art thou tranſported beſides thy ſelfe? In what ſweet extaſies art thou not wãdering? After what ſort of goods, canſt thou ſeeme to aſpire vnto? Thou beholdeſt all Greatneſſes in their Tarones, Riches in their my-

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nes, Glory in its Element, and the Vertues in their Empire. Thou taſteſt the true Contentments, in their purity, after a manner ſo diuine, as thou poſſeſſeſt all without deſiring any thing; & yet neuertheles not all, ſince the obiect of thy delights is infinite; which makes thee taſt new Sweetneſſes, not in the order of increaſe of pleaſure, but in that of the accompliſhment of the reſt, as being alwayes perfectly content.

Nor yet is this all, my Soule, to make thee admire, in *Idæa*, the Meruailles of all theſe diuine obiects of glory, and of felicity. It behoues me now to repreſent vnto thee beſides, the ſtrayte vnion that ioynes the happy Spirit with his ſoueraigne Good, I would ſay, the Soule with God. But how may it be done? God cannot produce a *Species*, or an Image of himſelfe, which is able to repreſent him, in regard the *Species* and the Image are alwayes more pure, & more ſimple then is the Obiect whence they proceed. Now, what *Species*, or Image may be purer, and more ſpirituall then God? Beſides that, all the *Species*, and all the Images are ſo determined in the forme of the thing they repreſent, as they cannot ſeeme to repreſent another. And it is true, that God is not a thing determinate, becauſe it hath not

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a particular Being, ſeparated from others; in ſuch ſort, as he eminently conteynes ech thing, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Portans omnia verbo virtutis ſue.* There is no *Species*, which is able to determine this God indeterminate; there is no Image created, or produced that can repreſent this God increated. Hence it is that God cãnot vnite himſelf to the Soule through a *Species* or Image, as we do other things. The Deuines ſay, that God vnites himſelfe to the Soule, *per ſe*, really; & they call this vnion, *per modum ſpecies.* But for to cleere the obſcurity, which is in all this myſtery, you muſt note, that when as God vnites himſelfe to the Soule, he eleuates the ſame to a being which is ſupernaturall and diuine. In ſo much, as it reſẽbles God himſelfe; not ſo, as it looſeth its proper Eſſence, but within the perfectiõ wherto it is eleuated, it deriues from the Obiect which cõmunicates to it, al the glory that it poſſeſſeth, as relatiõs to his ſimilitude; inſuch ſort as in regarding this happy Soule, they behold God.

Moreouer, it may be ſaid more cleerely, that God vnites himſelf to the Soule in ſuch manner, as the Fire, is vnited to the Iron: & foraſmuch as the Fire; as agent, is more noble then the Iron, it conuertes the Iron into its ſemblance, with ſo much perfection, as

one would ſay, the Iron had chaunged its proper forme into that of the Fire; yet notwithſtanding the Iron looſeth not awhit of its eſſence. Now this vnion of Fire with Iron is a reall vnion, *per ſe*, and not through *Species*, nor through Image. So God who is called fire (*Deus noſter ignis conſumens eſt*) is vnited to our Soule, *per ſe*, really, and receyuing the ſame into himſelfe, reduceth it to a being ſupernaturall, and deified; in ſo much as it ſeemes to be no more a Soule but God himſelfe. A verity, which *S. Iohn* publiſheth when he ſaith, *we ſhalbe like vnto him*. From the Tyme, that a Soule is vnited with God, he illumines it with a light of glory, to the end it may ſee him, and contẽplate him at its pleaſure, and with him all things which are in him, *formally* and *eminently* (to vſe the termes of the Schoole-men,) in ſo much, as it is ignorãt of nothing within the perfection of its wiſedome.

O admirable Science! Then ſhall it be, when it ſhall cleerely ſee within the Abyſſes of diuine ſecrets, that which God did before he created the world. How he produced eternally another himſelfe, without multiplication of Deities, and how betweene the producent, and the perſon produced, proceeds an eternall loue of him who engenders

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and of him who is engendred, which is this adorable Trine-vnity. It ſhal ſee beſides how this God, being engẽdred Eternally in himſelfe without mother, might be borne once on earth of the moſt glorious Virgin without Father. With what Prouidence he gouernes all things; with what Goodnes he created Man; & with what Loue he redeemed him. How he iuſtifies inuiſibly without forcing the liberty; How the works of his Iuſtice accord with thoſe of his mercy; How he ſaues through his grace; How he leaues them reprobate without fault; How his infallible Science agrees without the Contingency of things; How the Predeſtinate may damne himſelfe, and the Reprobate be ſaued, though the Science of God remayne alwaies infallible, and immutable as it is. The verity of all theſe ſecrets ſhalbe repreſented to its eyes, more cleere then the Sunne.

O what Science, my Soule, or rather what incomparable felicity proceeds from all theſe ſundry pleaſures? When ſhall this be, that thou cryeſt out with the Queene of *Saba*, ſpeaking to thy Lord, in lyke manner as ſhe ſpake vnto *Salomon*: What wiſedome is thine, O great King, what glory, and what magnificence admire they in thy

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Kingdome? What Citty is this ſame, repleniſhed with ſo many goods; what delicious meates and what precious wines, do they taſt at the table of thy banquets? What luſtre of greatnes appeares, in all thoſe, that attend vpon thee? Renowne may well publiſh thy prayſes in all places of the Earth, if al the Heaues together are not large inough to conteyne the rumour of them. O happy Spirits, who reigne in the manſion of this immortall glory! I wonder not awhit, at your ſo trampling vnder foot the Crownes and Scepters of the world, in iuſt pretenſion to the felicity you poſſeſſe. What fires, what torments, and what new puniſhments, would not one ſuffer for to purchaſe this ſoueraygne good, where repoſe is ſo durable? Gibbets, Hangmen, & all the inſtruments of Death, are as ſo many Trophies of the glory, which ſucceeds ſhame and payne. O how theſe diuine words of *S. Auguſtin*, do cauſe a ſweet melody to reſound, while he ſayes; *Let the deuills prepare me from henceforth as many ambushes as they will; let them addreſſe the laſt aſſaults of their power to encounter me; let faſtings macerate my body; let Sackcloth and Cilices torment my flesh; let tribulations oppreſſe me vnder their weight; let the long vigills shorten my lyfe; let him there giue affronts of his con-*

contempt, and heere of his cruelties; let cold freeze the bloud within my veynes; let the ſcorching of the Sun tanne me; let its parching reduce me into ashes; let aches cleane my head in peeces; let my hart reuolt agaynſt my Soule, my viſage looſe its colour, & all the parts of my body ſtoope to their ruine; let me yield my lyfe to the ſuffering of diuers torments: let my dayes ſlide away in weeping & continuull teares; and let the wormes, in fine, take hould of my flesh, and the corruption of my bones: All this would be nothing to me, ſo I might enioy Eternall Repoſe in the day of Tribulation.

I will belieue it, O great Saint: for what is it to endure al the euils of the world within Tyme, for to poſſeſſe all deſirable goods in the bower of Eternity! O ſweet reſidence, where Ioy eternally endures, and where delights are immortall! Where nothing is ſeene but God; where they know nothing but God! If they thinke, it is of God; if they deſire, it is God himſelfe. And howbeit the harts do there ſigh without ceaſe for loue, thoſe ſighes proceed not, but from the contentments of fruition, where Loue alwaies remaines in its perfection. Let Antiquity vaunt as much as it will of the Temple of *Theſſaly*, of the Orchards of *Adonis*, of the Gardens of *Heſperides*, of the pleaſures of the fortunate Ilands: Let Poets chaunt the pleaſures

ſures of their *Elizean* fields, and let humane Imagination aſſemble in one ſubiect whatſoeuer is more beautiful and delicious in nature, & they ſhall find in effect that all is but a vayne *Idæa*, in compariſon of the immortall pleaſure of this Seat of Glory. Let them imagine a Quire of *Syrens*, and let them ioyne therto in Conſort both the harpe of *Orpheus*, and the voyce of *Amphion*; Let *Apollo* and the Muſes likewiſe be there to beare a part: all this melody of theſe conſorts were but an irckſome noyſe of Windes & Thunders in competency of the diuine harmony of Angels. Let them make a Perfume of all what Sweets ſoeuer that *Arabia* & *Saba* hath had; let the Sea cõtribute therto all its *Amber*, and the flowers all their *Balme*; ſuch a perfume notwithſtanding would be but a ſtench & infection, in regard of the diuine odours, which are encloſed in the Emperialll Heauen.

O how *S. Paul* had reaſon to dye of loue, rather then griefe, in his prolongation to reuiew the felicity which he admired in his rauiſhment! *I deſire to dye in my ſelf, for to go to liue in him, whom I loue a great deale more then my ſelfe*, ſayd he, at all ſeaſons. O ſweet death, to dye of Loue, but yet the lyfe more ſweet, ſthat makes this Loue eternall! Me thinkes

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the ſad accẽts of that great King *Dauid* ſtrike nine eares, when he cryed out aloud, *This life to me is tedious in the abſence of my Lord*. This Prince poſſeſſed the goods of the Earth in aboundance, and Greatneſſes and Pleaſures equally enuironed the Throne of his abſolute Power: in ſuch ſort, as he had all things to his harts content. But yet for all that, he could not chooſe but be trobled in the midſt of the delights of his Court, ſince ſo we ſee his hart to ſend vp ſighs of Sorrow vnto Heauen, to liue ſo long a tyme on Earth.

What ſayſt thou now, my Soule, of the Greatneſſes & Magnificences of this diuine Pallace, where Honour, Glory, and all the Maieſties together expoſe to view whatſoeuer els they haue more precious and more rare: where Beauty appeares in its Throne in company of its graces, of its ſweetneſſes, of its baytes, of its allurements, and of its charmes; where, with power alwayes adorable it attracts the eyes to its admiration; & through a vertue, borne with it, ſubdues their lookes to the empire of its perfections. In ſuch ſort, as the eyes cannot loue but its obiect after admiring it, they are ſo taken with the meruailes, wherwith it abounds: where Goodnes exerciſing its ſoueraigne power forges new chaines of loue to attract

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the harts vnto it; and after hauing made a conqueſt of them, it nouriſheth them with a food ſo delicious, as they neuer breath but of ioy, tranſporting them wholy in the accõpliſhment of their felicity. In ſuch ſort, my Soule, as all the pleaſures together being eleuated in their firſt purity are there found to be collected in their origẽ, to the end the Spirit might neuer be troubled to ſeek its deſires.

Conſider the difference that is betweene the Contentments of the Earth, and thoſe of heauen; I would ſay, thoſe of the Pallace where Creatures make their aboad, and of thoſe where the Omnipotẽt lodgeth. Thou haſt ſeene within this firſt Pallace, the Meadowes enamelled with flowers, the Champaygnes couered with rich harueſts, and the Valleys peopled with a thouſand brookes; but theſe ſpring vp at the peeping of the *Aurora*, and wither at its ſetting. Theſe harueſts fetching their being from corruption, returne in an inſtant to their firſt beginning, after they haue runne daunger, to ſerue as a prey to tempeſts, and diſport to the winds. And theſe Brookes, feeble in their vertue, may well moderate the ardour of a vehement thirſt, but not quench it wholy, ſince the fire thereof alwayes renewes from its aſhes. On the contrary, within this celeſtiall

ſtiall houſe, the Lyllies wherewith the Virgins are crowned, and the Roſes which the Martyrs weare equally on their head, remayne alwayes diſcloſed as if they grew continually. The harueſts there are eternall, & in behoulding them, their diuine nature hath this property, that it ſatiates the Soule through the eyes, after ſo perfect a manner, as it is rauiſhed in its repoſe. The Fountaynes are of bottomleſſe Springs of all the immortall delights that may fall vnder the knowledge of the vnderſtanding; & howbeit they quench not thirſt, yet haue they power to do it: but to make their ſweetneſſes more ſenſible, they entertayne the drougth within their Soules, without diſquietnes, to the end, that being allwayes a dry with a thirſt of loue full of pleaſure, they may alwayes drinke, that ſo without ceaſe they may reſt contented.

Within that firſt Pallace the chaunting of the Birds did charme thine eares; and within this heere the ſweet muſicke of the Angels rauiſheth Spirits. Within that terreſtriall dwelling, the Spring, the Summer, & Autunme were inceſſantly occupied in producing thy pleaſures, & in this celeſtial bower an Eternity accompliſheth thee, withall the goods wherto imaginatiō may attain. There

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beneath had you diuers houſes of pleaſure for to walke in; and heere on high, the firſt thought of a deſire is able to build a number without number, within the ſpaces of the Heauens, with a perfection of an incõparable Beauty. So as if thou be delighted with the Courts of the Kings and Princes of the world, to behold the Greatneſſes that attend vpon them, turne away with a trice the eyes of thy memory from thoſe little Brookes of a tranſitory Honour, & admire this inexhauſtible Ocean of the immortall Glory of the Heauens, where all the happy Soules are engulfed, without ſuffering ſhipwrack. Be thou the *Ecchothen*, my Soule, of thoſe diuine words of the Prophet Dauid, when he cryed out ſo, in the extremity of his languor; *Euen as the Hart deſires the currẽt of the liuing waters; ſo, O Lord, is my ſoule a thirſt after you, as being the only fountaine, where I may quench the ſame.*

Thou muſt needs, my Soule, ſurrender to the Aſſaults of this verity, ſo ſenſible, as there is nothing to be deſired beſides this ſoueraigne good, whoſe allurements make our harts to ſigh at all howers; *How beautifull are your Eternall Pauillions? and how exceedingly am I enamoured with them* (ſaith the ſame Prophet?) *My ſoule faints, and I am rapt in extaſy*

tasy, *when I thinke, I shall one day see my liuing God face to face*. O incomparable felicity! to be able to cõtemplate the adorable perfections of an Omnipotent! To behould without wincking, the diuine Beauty of him, who hath created all the goodly things that are! To liue alwaies with him, and in himselfe! Not to breath but the aire of his Grace and not to sigh, but that of his Loue! Shall I afford the names of pleasures to these contentments, whiles all the delights of the world are as sensible dolours, in comparisõ of them? For if it be true, that a flash of a feeble Ray, should cause our eyes to weepe in their dazeling, for the temerity they haue had to regard very stedfastly its light; is it not credible, that the least reflexion of the diuine brightnes of the Heauens, should make vs blind, in punishment, for glauncing on an obiect so infinitely raysed aboue our Power? In so much as whatsoeuer is in Eternity can admit no comparison, with that which is cõprehended in Tyme. The Felicities of Paradise cannot be represented in any fashion, because the Spirit cannot so much as carry its thoughtes to the first degre of their diuine habitation. Hence it is that *S. Paul* cryed out, *That the eye hath neuer seene the Glory which God hath prepared for the iust.* What-

ſoeuer Saints haue ſaid heerof may not be taken for ſo much, as a meere delineation of its Image. And when the Angels ſhould euen deſcend frō the Heauens to ſpeake to vs therof, whatſoeuer they were able to ſay, were not the leaſt portiō of that wch it is. It is wel knowne that Beatitude cōſiſts in beholding God, and that in his viſion, the Soule doth find its ſoueraigne good; yet for al that, were this as good, as to ſay nothing: for howbeit one may imagine a thing ſweet, agreeable and perfectly delicious in the contemplatiō of this diuine Eſſence; yet were it impoſſible this good imagined, ſhould haue any manner of relation with the Soueraigne, which is inſeparable to this Glory. Let vs ſearch within the power of Nature, the extreme pleaſures, which it hath produced in the world hitherto from our Natiuity, and their Flowers ſhalbe changed at the ſame tyme into thornes, if but compared to thoſe plants of Felicity which grow in the Heauens. *Gold*, *Pearles*, the *Zephyrus*, the *Aurora*, the *Sunne*, the *Roſes*, *Amber*, *Muske*, the Voyce & Beauty, with all the ſtrang allurements that Art can produce, for to charme our ſenſes with, & to rauiſh our Spirits, are but meere *Chimera's*, and vaine ſhadowes of a body of pleaſure, formed through dreames, in equa-

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lity, to the leaſt obiect of contentmẽt which they receiue in Paradiſe. Which makes me repeate againe thoſe ſweet words with *S. Paul*, *When ſhall it be, Lord, that I dy to my ſelfe, for to go liue in you?* And with that great other Prophet; *I languiſh, o Lord, in expectation to ſee you in the manſion of your Eternall glory.*

What Contentment, my Soule, to ſee God! If the only thought of this good ſo raiſh vs with ioy; what delights muſt the Hope produce, and with what felicities are they not accompliſhed in its poſſeſſion? The Spirit is alwaies in extaſy, the Soule in raiſhment, and the ſenſes in a perfect ſatiety of their appetits. *Diſſolue then, O Lord, this ſoule from my body, for I dye alwaies through ſorrow of not dying ſoone inough, for to go to liue with you.* When as thoſe two faithfull Meſſengers brought equally betweene their thoulders that ſame goodly bunch of Grapes from the land of Promiſe, the fruit ſo mightily encouraged the people of Iſraell to the Conqueſt thereof, which had produced the ſame, that all fell a ſighing in expectation of the laſt Triumph. Let vs turne the Medall, and ſay that *S. Stephen* and *S. Paul* are thoſe two faithfull Meſſengers of this land of Promiſe, ſince both of them haue taſted of the fruit, & haue brought to Mortals the happy newes

thereof. So as if in effect we would behold another Grape, let vs mount with *S. Peter* vp to the Mount *Thabor*, where our Sauiour made the Apparition, through the splendour of the Glory which enuironed him. And it is to be noted they were two to bring this fruit, since there were two Natures vnited to one Person only. So as, my Soule, if curiosity and doubt transport thy Senses to behold the body of those beautifull Shadowes of Glory which I represent to thee; harkē to *S. Stephen*, while he assures thee that he saw the Heauens open. Lend thine eare to the discourses of *S. Paul*, when he saith, How all which he had felt of sweets and pleasures in that bower of felicity, cannot be expressed, because it cannot be comprehended.

The desire which *S. Peter* had to build three Tabernacles vpon this mountayne all of light, enforceth thee to giue credit, and belieue through this shew of fruit, that the soyle that beares it, abounds in wonders. And that thus we are to passe the Red-sea of torments and of paynes, within the Arke of the Crosse of our Sauiour, for to land at the Port of all those felicities. They are put to sale, my Soule; so as if thou shouldest say to me, what shold be giuen to buy the same; demaund them of thy Creatour, since he it

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is that first set price vpon them, on the mount *Caluary*. The money for them, is Patience in aduersity, Humility in Greatnesses, Chastity in presence of prophane obiects, and finally the Exercise of all vertues together, in the world, where Vice so absolutely reigneth. And if thou wilt buy thē with that Money which is most currant, and wherof God himselfe made vse, thou art to take thee to the Scourges, the Nayles, the Thornes, and the Gaul, and by a definitiue sentence to condemne thy lyfe to the sufferance of a thousand euills.

But let it not trouble thee awhit to pronounce this Sentence agaynst thy selfe: for if thou cast thy selfe into the burning fornace of diuine loue, thou shalt find the three Innocents there, in cōpany with the sonne of God, where for to sing forth his glory, thou shalt beare thy part. If thou cast thy selfe into the Sea of thy teares, *Ionas* shalbe affording thee roome within his little Oratory, for to publish togeather the diuine meruailes of the Omnipotent. If thou crucifiest all thy Passions, *S. Peter* will lend thee another halfe of his Crosse, to participate of his Triumph; so as in the extremest dolours, shalt thou be tasting the extremest delight. What may happen to thee in thy sufferāces

worſe then Death? Ah, what is more glorious then to ſuffer and dy for loue! And after God, what may we loue beſides him? What may we deſire, ſince his diuine preſence very perfectly fils vs, aſwell with happines as with Glory? If we muſt needs be ſtoned, as *S. Stephen* was, what ioy to haue our Soule enforced to go forth of the body with the ſtrokes of flints, that thoſe very ſtones might ſerue as Stayres to mount vp to Heauen by?

If we be to be laied on the gridiron as *S. Laurence* was, ſhall we ſeeme to complaine againſt the fire, for reducing vs to aſhes, while we are but aſhes our ſelues? And then a Hart which is truly amourous, doth burne of it ſelfe; in ſuch wiſe, as the flames of the world, cannot but help it to dy readily, which is all it deſires. If we be drawne in peeces with foure horſes, as *S. Hyppolitus* was, are they not ſweet ſtreynes of pleaſure, rather then of payne, for to haue the life ſnatched away with the armes and legs, for the Glory of him who hath created the Soule of that body? And beſides, what an honour was it to *S. Hyppolitus* to ſee his Spirit carried on a triumphant Chariot, ſo drawne with foure horſes to the Pallace of Eternity? If one ſhould be fleaed with *S. Bartholomew*,

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what a happines, trow you, would it be to him, who liuing but of the loue of God, ſhold behould this amorous life, by a thouſand wounds, to abandon Nature it ſelfe? & after hauing made of his bloud a Sea of loue, to fynd on its waters the port of Eternall ioy? If they throw vs downe headlong, from a pinnacle of the Temple, as *S. Iames* was, how ſweet a thing to be oppreſſed vnder the weight of this Croſſe! Should we haue ſo little courage amidſt ſo many companiõs, who with their bloud haue tracked vs out the way of glory.

The Pagans who euen buryed their hopes in their Tombe; not pretending other good, then that of a vayne Renowne, haue let vs ſee ſome kind of magnanimity in their actions; for whatſoeuer horrour and amazement Death may haue with it, yet could it not daunt them awhit, till the laſt ſhocke of its aſſaults. *Mutius* vanquiſhed the fire with one hand, which vanquiſhed all things in ſeeing it deuoured with its flames, without being moued with it. *Rutilius* ſoũd his country in his exile. *Socrates* drunke vp a glaſſe of poyſon to the health of his Spirit, for to giue teſtimony to his friends, that he was not ſicke of the feare of death. And *Cato*, he made of his boſome a ſheath for his

poynard. Ah! and what! Shall all these Soules of the world haue offered such glorious triumphs to vertue without knowing it; and we trample its Aultars, and profane its Temples, after we haue adored them? for though all be impossible to base Spirits, yet a generous hart can do all. What a shame were it for thee, my Soule, to fly those perils that giue Crownes? cãst thou not boldly thrust thy selfe pell-mell into a throng of ten thousand crucified, fifty thousand beheaded, an hundred thousand rent with Scourges, two hundred thousand ouerwhelmed, & murderd with seuerall punishments, wherein cruelty exercised its tyranny? Of a million of poore Hermits, and of Religious who haue happily yielded vp their life to the rigorous austerities of a number without number of dolours? And finally of two Millions of holy Soules, all sacrificed on the Aultar of the Crosse?

Dareſt thou go to Paradise, by a way all strewed with roses, knowing thy Sauiour to haue passed by that of Thornes? What a shame is it for thee, to be in Paradise alone without hauing suffered a litle euil for him, who should bestow so much good vpon thee? What wonder shines in this diuine Thought, that he who hath created the

world

world, ſhould haue ſuffered all the euills therof for recompence? He hath made the Thornes to grow, for to crowne his head withall. He hath formed in the Earth the mines of Iron, for to forge the nayles; and with the liberal hãd of his Prouidence, hath he watered the trees, which furniſhed the Iewes with thoſe ſtakes wherunto he was tyed; and at the ſame tyme fed, & protected the falſe witneſſes that accuſed him, the Iudges that condemned him, and the Executioners who tormented him. It is true, in the order of his iuſtice, he condemned *Adam* to death, and in the order of his loue he executes the Sentence vpon his owne lyfe. He would haue miſeries to reigne in the world but it was but for himſelfe, ſince he hath ſuffered them altogether.

So as, my Soule, if in the extremity of thy Sorrowes, the feeblenes of thy courage ſhould make thee to let fal ſome complaint, turne thy face to the Croſſe-ward to admire the glory which is inſeparable to it. One cannot go from one extreme to another, without paſſing through the midſt; I would ſay, that from the Paradiſe of the Earth, we cannot aſcend to that of Heauen, without paſſing through the fire, which is that midſt where we are neceſſarily to be purified, like

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as gould in the fornace. But ſince the generous are more animated through Hope of Recompence, then feare of payne ; be thou touched, my Soule, with the ſweet feelings of the felicity which is promiſed vs, rather then with the rigour of the Flames which are prepared. Thou wouldſt yield to Loue rather then to Force, to the end thy deſires be not mercinary. And repreſent to thy ſelfe that as the puniſhments of the guilty are eternal, ſo are likewiſe the ioyes of the bleſſed immortall. After the taſting of a thouſand yeares of pleaſures, they haue not yet begun; after an hũdred thouſand yeares of reſt, they find thẽſelues in the firſt moment according to our manner of ſpeaking. After a hundred thouſands of millions of yeares of contentments of ioy & felicity, they are alwaies in the firſt point of their happines, with ſo perfect a ioy of the knowledge, as they do nothing but reioyce in thoſe delights. In ſo much, as euen as long as God ſhalbe God, ſhall the Glory laſt, where the happy Spirits are filled with al ſorts of pleaſures, and conſequently for euer.

O Eternity, how profound are thy Abyſſes! The Imagination cannot ſinke its plummet into the bottome of thẽ, but is alwaies grieued to haue ſo ill employed its Tyme. After

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it hath thought all its lite on the meruailes, or rather on the miracles, which are enclo-ſed within thy labyrinthes, it dies in the im-potency of approaching to the entry. This *Dedalus* hath no thred, this Carriere hath no ſtop, this Circumference hath no Center, nor this Line a point. Eternity termines to God alone, & God alone to Eternity. O in-comprehenſible Myſtery, that a God ſhould recompence a ſigh of Loue, with an infinite loue! one moment of paine with an Eterni-ty of Glory! For hauing taſted neuer ſo little of the vinegre of his Chalice, to quench our thirſt for euer, in the torrent of theſe diuine Sweetneſſes! For hauing ſhed one teare of repentance, to make vs liue eternally in ioy and ſmiles! For hauing faſted one inſtant, to ſatiate vs for euer with meats the moſt deli-cious, which are found in Heauen. And fi-nally, to recompence one night of trauaile, with a day of eternall Repoſe.

Thinke neuer, my Soule, but vpon this Eternity? What pleaſures ſoeuer thou taſts in the world, repreſent to thy ſelfe they ſhall one day finiſh, and that in their end all the Thorns of their Roſes ſhall aſſemble to ma-ke thee feele the ſorrow of their priuation; if thou wouldeſt haue content, be it not but for Eternity; it is to dye continually, for to

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lyue with men, and it is to liue allwayes to lyue with God. It were to be vnfortunate to be happy on Earth, since the true way of felicity is Heauen. Felicity 'is as immortall as immortality it selfe, and whither Tyme cannot reach to, because it is out of Tyme. In such wise, my Soule, as thou shouldst learne to speake this diuine lãguage of the Angels, whose *Eccho* the Prophet is, when he saith, *I languish, O Lord, in the expectation of seeing you in the mansion of your glory.* Let this Languor deuoure thee, to the end, that dying of loue for thy God, who is soueraignely louely, thou maiest go to liue for him, since this is the only Spring of life.

Of

Of the Infernall Paynes.

THE Great King *Ezechias* was brought to ſuch a point offeare and aſtoniſhment, when the Prophet aſſured him he ſhold dye the morrow after, as that if his lot had reſerued him for ſhipwracke, he had now runne that danger in the Sea of his teares. That fatall Sentéce tooke away his lyfe before he dyed; for from the moment that the ſame was once pronounced vnto him, he breathed but the ayre of Approaches to an ineuitable death, where all Sorrowes heaped togeather in one what they had of bitter or rigorous, to torment anew his afflicted Spirit. This poore Prince had but Sighes & Teares to defend himſelfe withall agaynſt the batteries of a ſoueraigne Will. He plaines, but of

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of himſelfe; he cryes but onely to moue Pitty; he armes his hand with fury againſt his boſome, and with redoubled blowes ſmites his breaſt, belieuing he layd hard on his hart the while, as complice of the crymes, whoſe puniſhment he carryed. What ſhall he do? the night ſteales away inſenſibly, and the light which ſhall ſucceed his darkneſſes, is not to ſhine, but to ſhew him the way to the Tombe. Sleepe hath already taken its leaue of his eyes, for feare of being drowned in his continuall teares. Repoſe abandons his ſpirit in feare of Death which poſſeſſeth him. In ſo much as being reduced into a laſt point of Sufferance, he apprehēds that euery ſigh which he caſts to the wind, is to be the laſt of his life. The remembrance of his faults ſo forcibly aggrauates the puniſhment, as he dares not thinke of them, but with the ſorrow of heauing comitted them: a Sorrow indeed, ſo powerfull, as diſarmed the diuine Iuſtice of its Thunders.

This great King liſts vp his hart through Feare deiected, & conſtraines it to ſeeke for hope in that midſt of deſpaire. He humbly cōfeſſeth the truth of thoſe crymes, but with the ſame tongue wherewith he publiſheth them, he proteſts before his God, & his Iudge to commit them no more; and for aſſurance

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beſeeches the ſame God, and the ſame Iudge to caſt downe his eyes into the depth of his Soule, to ſee the feelings therof; in ſo much as he was heard. *Iſay* the Prophet receaues commaundement to reuoke the Sentence of his Death, to prolong the terme of his life, and to make the Sunne turne backe for ſome part of its way. O admirable Goodneſſe! The whole courſe of the Vniuerſe is chaunged, rather thē to refuſe a mans requeſt who promiſeth to God to chaūge the courſe of his life! But what difference betweene the Sentence which the Prophet pronounceth on the behalfe of God to a guilty King, & that which God himſelfe ſhal pronounce on that great day of his Iuſtice to the criminal Soules? They are both verily two Sentences of Death; but the one is ſignified in Time by a lyuing man, to a man that is liuing yet; & the other is proclaymed out of Time by a God, to Spirits which are criminall, & incapable of repentance. Beſides, we ſee how the firſt Sentence was reuoked through grace, while the other remaines inuiolable by Reaſon. Mercy moderates the rigour of that there, & Iuſtice augmēts the paine of this heere with an Eternity! O moſt dreadfull Sentence!

There was with the *Perſians* a certaine Priſon, whence the guilty were neuer to go forth,

forth, which they called by the name of *Lethe*, as who would ſeeme thereby to repreſent a place of Obliuion, & where the Thoughts of men do neuer approach. This Priſon may well be compared to that of Hell, from whence the Thralls do neuer get forth, nor where the happy Spirits do neuer deſcend in thought. It is a place of forgetfulnes, ſince God remembers not the wicked Soules, but to cauſe them only to be tortured by the inſtruments of his Iuſtice: *They haue no other dwelling then that of their ſepulchers*, cryeth out the Pſalmiſt; which is as much to ſay, as they ſhalbe buried eternally in the tombe of Hel; or as *S. Auguſtine* ſaith, they ſhalbe full of life in the midſt of their torments, in being alwaies renewed againe amidſt their paynes, without euer dying. O cruell life! Seing it is more vnſupportable then Death! Let the moſt afflicted Soules appeare, forſooth, vpon the Theater of their Martyrings; let *Iultius* recount at large the hiſtory of his ſufferãces. Let *Perſindas* repreſent to vs ſenſibly the cruelty of his puniſhment, at the light of the Sunne, where he is expoſed al couered with honey to the mercy of the Flies. Let *Lepidus Craſſus* communicate with vs through Contagion, a part of his euill at ſuch tyme as they ſtraitly bound his body to a carkaſſe, to the

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end the stench might serue as a Torturer to tyrannize his lyfe to death. Let *Phocinus* the *Locrian*, shew vs cleerely by the light of the Fire which consumed him, the torments wherewith he was tyrannized, in feeling himselfe by little and little reduced into Ashes.

Let *Pomindus* the Philosopher expresse to vs, in the Amazement of his mortall silence which the punishment of his tongue cut out had brought him to, some feeble dolour of his smart. Let *Lysander* buryed in the brasen Bull by the Tyrant of *Syracusa* make vs to heare the sad accents of his cryes for to publish with the language of his plaints, the truth of his torments. Let *Lelius Cocles* discouer in his countenance, the terrour and the anguish of his hart, vpon the Cliffes of the Sea, from whence he was cast downe headlong. Let *Martius Nevola* mixing the wind of his sighs with those that enkindled the flames which consumed him, conueigh to our eares the sad harmony of his last groanes. Let *Virginia* the wife of *Lertius* the Romã, relate to vs at leasure the traunces of Martyring of a hart impoysoned by the cũning Enemy, who by litle and litle extinguished her in a long course of yeares, to make her sensible by degrees of all the rigors of death.

Let *Emilia* represent to vs, in her despayre, the anguishes of a dying Soule, amidst the presse of her disastres. Let the wyte of *Brutus* send to our eyes the smoake of the burning coales, that consumed her bowels, to let vs feele the heat wherewith she was burned. Let *Messina*, before she pluckt out the Hart from her bosome, partake vs with her torments, where through a Sentence of her fury, she condemned her self in making the one part of her Body to serue as a Hangmã to destroy the other. Let *Eugenia* making a halter of the silke of her Harpe, giue vs some testimony of the dolour of her precipitous Death. Let *Cleopatra* infect the Ayre with the Poyson, which deuoured her life, for to make vs Companions of her euils.

All these kinds of Martyrings, these Tortures, these dolours, these vncouth torméts and these euils without example, and these tyrannies exercised by men, more cruell thẽ Tygres and Beares, can admit no comparison with the least paine of the damned. The Thornes of these sufferances, are Roses; and the bitternes of these anguishes is but hony. One moment of the paines in hell is more intollerable then an Age of Afflictions in this world. Let them lend their eares to the lamentable cryes of *Ampilans* King of the

Pyroti; when as being fastened to his rich Couch with the rude chaines of a thousand dolours procured through a *Sciatica*, his torments pluckt out the hart from his bosome without snatching away the life, and with a cruell encounter drew his Soule to his lips without suffering it to go forth. To bewaile the rage whereto his euill had brought him, makes him to throw out fire by the eyes, rather then to power out water; to complaine with Sighes, of the excesse of his sufferances, learnes him a language so dreadfull, as the noyse of Thunder is not more terrible thē that of his voyce, made hoarse with the force of crying. They do well to decke his bed with the richest ornaments that may be found, to bring him rest, while his body is a Bush of Thornes, wherewith his Soule is straytly hedged in: In such sort, as the points of its thornes do afford him a thousād prickes of dolour & martyrings, whose very thought is full of horrour. They may cast their lookes of pitty on him long inough, while Cruelty, which incessantly butchers him, makes them so feeble in his succour, as he alwaies breaths in the death of his paines without being able euer to dye.

But turne we the Medall, and lend the eare of our imagination to the warnings of

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of that great King *Pharao*, bound in hell on a bedd of deuouring flames, which burne without conſuming him, and which conſume him, without reducing him to aſhes. What inequality of euills, and what difference of cryes? The one in tyme feeles very piercing dolours vpon a couch of Thornes, and the other ſuffers a thouſand paynes, all eternall, vpon a bed of fire. He there yields vp his miſerable lyfe, to the laſt ſhocke of a cruell torment; and he heere reuiuing all-wayes of his Aſhes amidſt his puniſhment, lyues not but to dye in his ſufferances of a death eternally lyuing. The former comforts himſelfe with the hope of a Tombe, & the latter finds increaſe of his torments, in the deſpayre of euer ſeeing an end. Let them thinke a litle on the ſenſible torméts, wherwith *Tegonus*, that great Prince of *Almaine* was afflicted, when as his hart ſerued before hand as a Coffin for the worms, which gnawed him without ceaſe to deuoure his lyfe. A puniſhment as cruell as prodigious: this was a lyuing death, gliding in his boſom, where it forged darts of incomparable dolour for to martyr him withal. He wants for nothing in the midſt of his Greatneſſes, and yet wants he all, ſince all fayles him of his content. His ſubiects are about him to

receiue

receyue his Commaundements, but he knowes not what to commaund them for his ſuccour. The remedyes they offer him are vnprofitable in the ignorance of his malady; for the skilfulleſt Phiſitians of them vnderſtand not the cauſe therof, which makes thé ingenious without thinking of it, to afflict him anew, in ſteeping his mouth with a thouſand ſorts of bitterneſſes. He cryes out in the extremity of his languours, but ech one by his eyes makes anſwere to his tongue, in weeping at the noyſe of his ſobs and his complaynts. And after hauing ſuffered as many deaths as he ſent forth ſighes, he payed at laſt the tribute which he owed to Nature.

Caſt yet the view of your imagination vpon the backſide of the Medall, to heare the cryes, a great deale more hideous, of another Prince abiding in Hell, being touched with the malady of a worme which gnawes him eternally, without deuouring him. He ſees all his Subiects about him, as culpable as he, but in the aſtoniſhment they are in, they anſwere him but by the eyes only, as vnable to ſuccour him, or to helpe themſelues. The Deuils are his Phiſitians, who not knowing the meanes to cure him, inuent all ſorts of puniſhmẽts to tyrannize his Soule.

But what difference of paynes? That Prince of the world findes this conſolation in his afflictions, that after the wormes ſhall haue deuoured his Hart, his life ſhall haue an end with the end of their prey, and conſequently his punithment. And on the contrary this Prince of Hell, finds alwaies the begining of his euills in the end of his paines. The worme that gnawes him, is immortall like as the prey which it deuoures: In ſo much, as his dolours remaine extreme in their exceſſe. The one turning his Face to the Tombwards, beholds there his ſufferance buryed with him, and the other ſees himſelfe buryed yet lyuing within a tombe of Fire, which through a cruell property entertaines that which it burnes, to the end it may neuer wãt matter.

What may be imagined more inſupportable, then the torment wherewith *Charles* King of Nauarre dyed of? The Phiſitians knowing he had a very little life left him in the body, employed this vayne deuice for his comfort, forſooth, to ſow him vp in a ſheet ſteept in *Aqua-vitæ*, of purpoſe to prolong his life; but the ill lucke was, that the ſeruant who had ſowed him therein, burnt the end of his threed inſteed of cutting it aſunder, where to ſay better, he burnt the

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whole ſheet, and the King that was ſhut within. Repreſent we to our ſelues now the feareſull cryes of this vnhappy Prince, who being enchayned in a ſtraite Priſon all of Fyre, caſts forth the laſt ſighes of his life, in the Flames, quickened with ſo exceſſiue an heate as they may not be compared but to choſe of the Fornace. They come to his Succour, but Death at that inſtant, touched with pitty, preuents the helpe they could afford, in finithing his euils with the end of his life.

But looke we yet ſtill in the backeſide of this Madall, vpon the torments and cruelty which a new King ſuffers in the midſt of Hel, being faſt enchayned within a burning priſon, where he alwayes burnes without euer dying. What difference of Torments! The one is left to the mercy of deuouring flames, being watered with a water which increaſeth the heat; imploying in vayne for his Succour, the endeauour of his voyce; & the other enuironed with deſpaire, endures the paine of eternall Fire, which burnes him without taking away his life. You ſee very ſenſibly, O you ſoules of the world, how the payne which one ſuffers in this vale of teares, cannot be compared, how cruell ſoeuer, with the leaſt dolours of the dãned. I

I graunt the Stone, or Grauell, the winde-cholicke, the Sciatica, and a thousand other Maladies besides, deliuer you into a restles combat of punishments, and torments, yet their sharpest fits, their piercing points, their gaul, and their rigours are true pleasures, ioyes, and rauishments of Spirit, in comparison of the sufferings of Soules eternally criminall.

Let *Lucius Fabius* maintayne as long as he will, in the discourse of his miseryes, how the last day of his lyfe had lasted three Monthes, he lyuing the while without being able once to close the ey-lids at the approch of sleep. Let *Theocrates*, publishing his vnhappines, vaunt contentiously in the presence of the most afflicted Soule, how he had lodged thirty six yeares in a bed, in cõpany with a thousand sorts of payne, which visited him one after another. Let the vnfortunate *Caricles*, trayling without cease the durt of his body, through that of the streets of *Athens*, for the space of sixty yeares, moue cõpassion in the harts of those, which neuer had it, in consideration of his Misery; yet is the lamentable history of all these euils a very Canticle of ioy and gladnes, in comparison of the sufferances of the damned. For if *Fabius* haue watched three monthes in the

world,

world, *Cain* neuer ſleeps in hell: if *Theocrates* haue paſſed his Thorny life in a like couch, & that he neuer came forth to re-enter into the Tomb: it is fifteene hundred yeares or more ſince the Richman hath lodged in a bed of flames, in the midſt of Hell, without hope that the ice of death ſhall euer ſlake the heate of its fires. Let *Caribs* trayle his liuing carkaſſe, in the diuers wayes, which lead him to the Tombe, he finds yet a Port after ſo many ſtormes; but *Pharao* may be dragged long inough, by the deuils in Hel, ere there be any death, or ſepulcher for him, which may afford him an end to his paines. So as the difference is ſo great betweene the euills of the one, and the punishment of the other, as one cannot thinke of it, but with a profound aſtoniſhment: *How profound, O Lord, are the Abyſſes of thy Iuſtice!*

You Soules of the world, pul off the veyle that blinds you ſo; Breake you the rackes of your Paſſions, that with-hould you in your vices. To what purpoſe, thinke you, is a moment of pleaſure, while it robs you of eternal glory, and brings you forth a Hel of dolours? A little ſhiuering of a Feauer makes you to quake for feare. A fit of Heate makes you to breath the aire of a burning life, & to ſigh at once with the ardour which

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consumes you quite. Alas! What would you do in Hell, where the Cold of Ice, where the Heat of the flames shal by turnes tormēt you eternally? One glasse of a potion, one little twitch with a launcent, two nightes without sleepe, within a bed very softly made, brings you to the last gaspe. Ah! What shall it be in those darkesome places, where a gaul, more bitter then gaul, shalbe alwaies in your mouth! Where a thousand strokes of the launcets of fire shall pierce you, not in the veyne, but to the hart, with a wound alwayes bloudy, and euer new, for to eternize the payne thereof; where a perpetuall vnrest shall banish rest for euer from your spirit, and sleepe from your eyes.

There was a great Personage of our tyme who had so great a horrour of Medicines, that al the euils whose dolours he had proued were a great deale lesse sensible to him then their bitternes; In so much, as after he had tasted the gaule thereof diuers tymes, this cōceipt came into his mynd, that when there should be no other punishment in Hell then that of taking continually medicines, it would be insufferable. But I should thinke that if all the gaule, and all the bitternes of the Earth were put together in a vessell, one would take that liquour for imaginary

Nectar,

Nectar, in compariſon of the puddle, & ſalt waters; whereof the damned are made to drinke. Bethinke your ſelues, profane Spirits, who eſtabliſh in the world the foundation of your repoſe. Open your eyes to behould the diſaſtres which enuiron you. You ſeeke a Paradiſe on Earth, but you find not in it, any other Center then Hell. What pretend you? Pleaſures can accompany you no further thē the Tombe, you muſt quit their company with life. Now what a griefe hath one in dying to abandon the ſeat of delights for to enter into that of torments?

Admit, one had paſſed very pleaſantly a hundred yeares of life, at the laſt moment of that tyme, what ſatisfaction remaines him thereof, ſince by the law of diuine Iuſtice, it muſt neceſſarily enſue, that euery one in his turne ſhalbe gathering the thornes of all his Roſes? Euery ioy hath its ſadnes, euery fortune its croſſes: ſo likewiſe may we boldly ſay, that euery pleaſure hath its payne. If we let our firſt life runne out in contentments, the latter ſhal become immortall in puniſhments. This is an inuiolable decree pronounced by God himſelfe, vpon the Mount of *Caluary*, that he who will not follow the way which he hath taken vpō him, for to go to Heauen, ſhall neuer enter ther-

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in. Flatter not your ſelues, you Princes of the Earth, who being rayſed vpon Thrones of ſnow and ſmoke, forget your ſelues ſo much in your Greatneſſes, as you become Idolatours of your good Fortune. If you be borne puiſſant, conſider how your power is of glaſſe, and that with all your Treaſures you ſhall not be able to purchaſe a moment of aſſured life. All the aduantage you haue aboue others, is to be able to hide your faults with the more artificiouſnes, vnder your ſumptuous habit; but vpon the vncertaine day of your Death, ſhall you make demonſtration of your miſery; and the Corruption which you carry within, muſt neceſſarily appeare without. Thinke you that the Empire which you haue heere beneath, extends any further then the Sepulcher? Euen as at your birth you were wrapped in Clouts; ſo likewiſe dying, wil they be foulding you in a ſheete, how rich ſoeuer you be. And your Diademe ſhall remaine in your Pallace for to Crowne others withall, in the ſelfe ſame way where they are to follow you, ſince they likewiſe are continually to dye.

But this is not all, you are alſo to paſſe the examine of your life before a ſoueraigne Iudge, and dreadfull in his Iuſtice. You ſhal haue no other ſuccour thē that of your workes

kes. If they be good, their recompence is prepared; and if they be naught, then paynes attend them. In what amazement, and in what terrour is a Soule brought vnto before the face of his God, whiles his crymes accuse him, and condemne him to euerlasting fires? *O how the Iudgements of God are different frō those of men*, cry es that great Saint! You delicate Soules, whome a little griefe makes to looke pale with feare, astonishment and feeblenes, what will you do in Hell, where euills are in their excesse, without finding any end in them? The noyse of a fly troubles you, and that of a Caroch hinders you from sleepe. Ah! What shall that be in those darcksome places, where the dreadfull cryes of the Torturers, and of the guilty shall continually strike your eares? If you passe but one night only in the world without a winke of sleep, you fall to complayning after you haue fetched a thousand & a thousand sighes, in expectation of day; & there below, within those obscure dwellings, the darcknesses are eternall, like as the disorders and disquietnesses are.

One winters day killes you quite within the goodly prisons of your chambers, & a summers-day within that of your Halles, built of proofe agaynst the heate of the sun

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for to auoyd alike, the incommodityes both of cold and heate; And in Hell shall you alwayes burne, if the cold of ice doe not giue you some respites to the tormentes of your fires, and by that meanes one punishmēt come to succeed another. Hēce it is that the Prophet cryes; *Lord haue pitty vpon me, in the day of thy Iustice*. O day full of horrour & amazement! Where the liuing flames, after they haue deuoured the world, shall prosecute the guilty Soules in the deepest Abysses, for to exercise the Iustice of the Omnipotent! What vnprofitable cryes, what vaine lamēts! They may sigh long inough, for the voyce of their repentance shalbe so feeble, as it shall not be able euer to cōuey its accēts to the eares of God. But what disorder also of a iust cruelty? The innocent shall curse the guilty Father, and shall reioyce in his torments, as in so many effects of the diuine Iustice; for the punishments of the damned make a part of the felicity of the happy Spirits, reioycing in the Iustice of God, as well as in his Mercy. *The cryes of the accursed Soules, O Lord, are as so many Canticles of thy Glory, since they publish incessantly the truth of thy Iustice.*

O impious Soules, in your voluntary blindnes! Why will you not suffer your reason

ſon to ſee how the pleaſures you taſt in this world, do bring the conſequence of the euills, which you ſuffer in the other? When will you confeſſe, that the hope which makes you to imbrace with ſo much affection the future, is vayne and deceiptfull, & that it hath for foundation of its promiſes, but the argument of your Misfortunes. You run after imaginary goods; & in the end of your Carriers, you ſhall find but true euils. Since repoſe ſeemes as naturally ſweet vnto vs, why haue we not the Eternity therof? Our lyfe is a new Hell of annoyes and diſquietnes, and yet neuertheles within the Hell of this life, we build to our ſelues another Hel, to lyue there eternally. What a prodigy of cruelty do we ſeeme to exerciſe agaynſt our ſelues, for to ſell an immortall felicity, for a moment of pleaſures? So as if the ioy which is promiſed vs, hath not baites which are powerfull inough to attract vs to it, let the payne which followes the offence, purify our deſires, & iuſtify all our enterpriſes.

O, how *S. Auguſtine* makes, on this ſubiect, a ſweet harmony to reſound in our eares, when he ſayth; *I loue thee not, Lord, for the feare I haue of thy Hell, nor for the hope of thy Paradiſe, but rather for the loue of thy ſelfe.* How many mercinary Soules do we ſee in the

world,

world, who haue no other obiect in their actions, thē that of Glory, or that of Payne; & in a word who loue not God, but for his Paradiſe, nor feare him a whit but for his hel. What affectiō? As if vertue had not Charmes inough to make it ſelfe beloued without the helpe of recompence, and of paine? Alas, Lord! what manner of reſpects would the wicked affoard you in this world, if you could be without Paradiſe, or if you had not a Hell, for to exerciſe your Iuſtice in? ſince with all your felicities, & your puniſhments, they ſo deepely forget the Greatneſſe of your infinite Glory, and your equall power, as to liue without yeilding to your diuine Maieſty, but the leaſt homage of thoght. Who as if they were Gods themſelues on earth, regard not Heauen, but to looke on the Starres.

My Soule, Loue then thy God, for his owne ſake, ſince he is perfectly louely; nor euer thinke of his Paradiſe, but in thinking of him, ſince he is thy ſoueraigne Good. Feare him in like manner, without muſing on the Thunders of his Iuſtice, with an amourous feare, which hath for obiect, but Humility, and Reſpect. So as, if in this world the Good be alwaies good, content thy ſelfe with the ſatisfaction, which is inſeparable

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to it. For Vertue hath this proper to it, that of it selfe, it recompenceth those who put its precepts in practice; euen as Vice incessantly racks and tortures those, who follow it. All laudable actions produce in generous harts, certaine feelings of ioy, so extreme, as when Renowne shall haue no Laurels nor Palmes for to crowne them with, yet he that is the Authour of them, shal not cõplayne thereof, since he hath beene already rewarded for it, euen before he lookt for any certaine recompence at all. And the cõtrary is noted in pernicious & criminall effects. Payne can hardly be seuered from the Offendour, nor the Hangman from the Guilty. A secret torment glides in his entrailes, and himselfe serues as a Hangman against himselfe, for to tyrannize vpon himselfe: So true it is, that diuine Vertue of it selfe communicates the good of its Nature, and Vice the euill. But let vs not go forth of Hell with our thoughts, for not to enter thereinto in effect.

Flatter not your selues so, my Dames, as to thinke that Hell belonges not to you; it is for the guilty. Iudge your selues without passion, whether you be exempt frõ cryme or no, since at all tymes, & at euery moment you offend God diuers wayes. If you will

mount vp to Heauen after your Death, first descend into Hell during your life, and represent to your selues liuely the deplorable estate, whereto the miserable are reduced; I meane those Soules, which haue lodged heretofore in as beautifull bodyes, as yours are; and pursue you with your thoughts the toilesome occupations whereunto they are eternally condemned. You rise in the morning to take a liquour all of Amber for its sweetnes, and of Pearles for its price; and going forth of your bed, you enter into your sumptuous Cabinet, where your faire Mirrour attends you, to represent you as faire as euer. There it is, where you consider at leasure the dumbe Oracles of its deceiptfull Glasse, of purpose to learne of it some new secret or other in fauour of your Beauty, be it to shadow it with a little thy, or with some tresse of hayre, dishcueled in disorder on your cheekes, & vpon your brow, least the wrinkles cause not a feare in your Thralls. What new charmes, what graces neuer seene before, do you borrow from the care you take, to cultiuate the Flowers of your face of Earth?

You passe ouer at your pleasure three houres of tyme, and a full whole day if the humour take you, to teach your eye with

what grace, how, and with what force it ſhould caſt its looke, for to wound the hart withall; with what ſmiles, and with what proportion, you ſhould open the mouth, to let the doble rowes of your pearles appeare, or rather to ſpeak truly, of your rotten teeth, which inceſſantly deuoure the pleaſures of your life. You ſhameſully lay open your boſome, all of Snow, which melts with the glaunce of the eye; and by a meanes which you haue taught it, you make it ſigh with pauſes, for to moue the rocky harts with its ſweet pulſes. What crime ſo playne to make the whole world guilty? For the furthering of theſe errours, you dreſſe vp your body, all of duſt & earth, with the richeſt Ornamẽts, and then it is, that imitating the Peacocke, you waxe proud of the beauty of your plumes, without caſting your eyes the while vpon the miſeries which ſerue you as foũdation. What turnings & windings of Vanity do you fetch before your glaſſe? But which way ſoeuer you turne, if you open the eyes of your ſpirit, you ſhall ſee the corruption wch you couer vnder a fraile skin, bedawbed al ouer with a plaiſter. Iſſuing forth of your Pallace, you go to viſit the Temples to profane them, for inſteed of adoring God, who hath guided your ſteppes thither, you make

your Vaſſals to adore you there, & through a guilty power ſnatch away the vowes, and ſacrifices which belong to their Creatour.

You are now returned againe into your Pallace, you count the number of your cõqueſts; your naughty *Genius* alwayes in action to deceiue you, perſuads you to belieue that your eyes worke the ſame miracles, which the Thunders do, ſince they wound the harts, without any feeling of the bodyes; and in this beliefe you commit a thouſad crimes of vanity. In the meane while a Page comes to call you to the Table, where all the delicious meates are ſerued in, by order, before you. And during the repaſt, after an eloquent Paraſite ſhall haue charmed your Spirit, with the melody of prayſes, which you deſerue not, a Muſike of inſtruments charmes your eares with new allurements of Sweetnes. They preſent in the plates of your latter courſe, the ſweeteſt ſpoyles of the foure Seaſons. And while of cuſtome the Muſitians are tuning the Motect of your Perfections, you ſollicitouſly enquire of ſome one of yours, what manner of weather it is? If it chãce to rayne, you ſhut your ſelfe vp after dinner within your Cabinet of pleaſure, for to heare in particular the ſweet voyce of a Page, whome you cauſe to

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ſing the Ayre which beſt agrees with your paſſion. The rayne is blowne ouer, and the Caroch attends you at the gate of your Pallace, for you to walke abroad, in the compa-ny of thoſe who are moſt agreable to you, into the Forreſts and Parkes, whoſe wayes are bordered with flowers, and enriched al along with cleere fountaynes, where the water appears ſo limpide, as perſuades harts with the dumbe language of their purling, to quench in their ſiluer ſtreames the thirſt they feele.

In the meane tyme the Sun is ſet, to cauſe freſhnes to ariſe from the humide imbraces of its deere *Thetis*; and then it is, when the Aire powres on the plants, the drops of the ſweate, which the heate of the Sun hath cauſed in it, during the tyme of its courſe, whiles the Birds fall a bathing thé ſelues, in ſinging in the litle waters of this dew. The night comes ſlowly on, and its returne ſeemes to bring you a thouſand pleaſures; for during the repoſe of its reigne, an infinite number of ſunnes, whereof art is the workeman, hung vpon the ſeeling of your chá-ber, illumine its obiects for to make the beauty therof appeare. What idle diſcourſes are here broght forth in ieſt? The flatterers play new their parts in the preſéce of your blind

Spirit, and in their Comedyes they repre-
fent to you, the fabulous Hiſtory of your
Actes, worthy of prayſe, with warrant of
their credit, but full of reproch according to
the truth. The Tyme notwithſtanding
is ſlipt away, they call you to Supper,
where the appetite is contented with deli-
cious meates, whoſe ſweetnes art ſeemes to
vary diuers wayes. After the repaſt, you re-
turne to your Cabinet, or rather into your
terreſtriall Paradiſe, where the Muſike at-
tends you, for to charme the ſenſes of your
eare, ſince thoſe of the eyes, of the ſmell, &
of the tongue haue beene ſatisfyed already.

The Clocke which euer wakes, doth ad-
moniſh you, without thinking of it, how
the night is ſlid away for to fetch vs day a-
gayne, which ſweetly conſtraynes you to
paſſe from the repoſe of your waking to that
of ſleep, for to giue more liberty to your ſpi-
rit to entertayne it ſelfe with dreames. But
then to bring you a ſleepe more ſweetly,
you ſtill cauſe delicious Muſike to be ſoun-
ded euen to your bed. The Damoſells bring
in your bags, & prepare your night-ſtuffe,
which attends you at your glaſſe, where
before you vndreſſe your ſelfe, you admire
anew the Sweetneſſes, the Graces, the
Moles, the Charmes, the Allurements & the
curio-

curioſity of your Beauty, & with an Idolatrous eye, you often cõtemplate the imaginary perfections of your face. Thẽ glaũcing your eyes on the very ſame eyes, you loue them now more then euer, in remẽbrance of the new cõqueſts they haue made that day: your cheeks of lilyes & roſes, your necke of iuory, your ſnowy boſom, & alabaſter hãds; theſe are the fooliſh termes of your ſeruants which haue part in this affection, as hauing contributed their power to the achieuemẽt of theſe conqueſts. And then do you cultiuate yet more, according to your cuſtome, by a guilty care, thoſe Roſes and thoſe Lillyes of your feature, that they wither not in the abſence of the Sun, I would ſay, during the Ecclypſe of that of your Eyes, whoſe ſweet influences make them to blow forth.

At laſt they lay you on a bed moſt refulgent, all gorgeous in riches, and whereon it ſeemes, as if the happy *Arabia* had powred forth a part of its odours; and to attract the ſleepe more ſweetly into your eyes, you cauſe to be ſent for ſome pleaſing Muſike of a Voyce, which rauiſhes your ſenſes with ſo much ſweetnes, as they dye with ioy, without dying notwithſtanding. Are not theſe great pleaſures, trow you, if they could laſt? I ſpeake to Soules who ſeeke their Paradiſe

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on Earth. But the common calamity ſo preuailes, as theſe delights euẽ dy in their birth, & their priuation affords them a great deale more torments then doth their preſence produce ſweetneſſes.

Let vs caſt now our eyes at the laſt, on the backſide of this Medall, & conſider the cruel Metamorphoſis of theſe contentments, in the intollerable puniſhments which Eternally torment a damned Soule. Let vs behould the cruell exerciſe of its payntull progreſſe in Hell. You muſt take no great heed to the terms of Day, of Mattins, of Euening, or Morning-calles, whereof I ſerue my ſelfe in this enſuing deſcription, for that I am forced thereunto, to keepe ſome order in my diſcourſe. The deuils in the morning then, come to awake this damned Soule, howbeit indeed, ſhe ſleepeth not a wincke through the dreadfull noyſe of their howlings. Theſe are the Chambermaydes which fetch her out of her bed all of fire, for to conduct her into a Cabinet all of Ice, not of Myrrors, for ſhe durſt not haue lookt thereinto, for feare of the feare of her ſelfe, ſo hideous and dreadful ſhe is. Theſe wicked Spirits do help to dreſſe her after they haue made her take a draught of Sulphure within a rotten Veſſell, where the worms do breed in ſholes. One combes

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her head, and that with a combe of iron with ſharp points which makes the bloud to follow. Another colors her cheekes with the red of Spayne with a penſill of fire. He there waſhes her face with puddle water, & ſcalding hot withall; and he heere puts on a robe of liuing coales on her backe; and in this equipage a new Deuill more hideous then death preſents himſelfe to her, & ſerues her as an Vſher to conduct her to a burning Chariot, to conuey her not to a Temple, but to the foote of a dreadfull Aultar, where ſhe is cruely ſacrificed without looſing her life.

They lead her afterwards in the ſame chariot into a diſmall Pallace, where ſhe finds the tables couered, and ſet with all ſorts of poyſonous and contagious Serpents, wherwith they feaſt her. All that dinner while a hideous noyſe of howlings, and dreadful cryes, ſerues for the Muſike to charme her eares withall. After repaſt is ſhe brought backe agayne to her Cabinet, where all the obiects of horrour, and amazement are aſſembled togeather for to afflict the ſenſe of her ſight. And after that, a Deuill ſings her an Ayre, whoſe ditty is the Sentence of her condemnation, and this verity the burden of it, *How the paynes ſhe endures ſhall be eternall.* What a Song? The tyme of her wal-

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king approaches, they bring then the fyery Chariot before the gate of her darkeſome Pallace. She mounts into it, and thence rage deſpayre, fury and cruelty draw her into an obſcure torreſt of Cypres, where the Owles and Rauens do ſcreech inceſſantly; ſo as ſhe heares but the noyſe of death, not being able to procure death. She is now returned, ſhe finds the ſame Table ſpread agayne, and with the like Cates, whereof ſhe feeds of force, to the noyſe of a like Muſike to that of dinner. Being riſen from Table, the Deuill that hath the charge to wayte vpon her, comes againe into her Cabinet and ſings her likewiſe the ſame Canzonet of her dreadful Sentence, with the ſelfe ſame burden as before, *How the paynes which she endures shalbe eternall*. In the meane tyme they bring her to a bed of thornes, whereinto they caſt her at ſuch tyme as ſhe was wont to take her reſt in the world; and thus paſſeth ſhe ouer the night in theſe torments, without euer ſeing any end thereof. Is not this a fearefull life?

Behould, my Dames, the exerciſe of thoſe who haue imitated you in your pleaſures. Behold the employments of their whole progreſſe. Theſe are no fables I tell you, for like as the noiſe of the ſwindge of the world doth hinder you from hearing the ſweet harmony

mony of the motions of the Heauens; so the selfe same noyse seemes to hinder you likewise from vnderstanding the hideous cryes of a *Cain*, of a *Pharao*, of an impious Richmã, and of a thousand of others your like, who haue hitherto after so lõg a tyme beene burning in Hell, and so shall burne for euer, without hope to see any end of their panes. That depends now on you, my Dames, to chuse to you one of these two liues heere. If you be tasting of hony in your youth, you shall haue but bitternes in your old age. If you gather the Roses in your spring, the Thornes shalbe reserued for your winter. Chuse hardly, behold your selues expressed as *Vlisses* at the entrance of two wayes, far different the one from the other. That of Vertue is stwowed with Nettles, and couered with Stones, & that of Vice is enamelled with flowers, and bordered with brookes, whose sweet murmur inuites you to follow the traces of their course. So as if you would needs know, where both these ways do termine themselues; the one in eternall Death, and the other in Life. And herein the example of an infinite number, which haue beene saued by the one, & lost by the other may seeme to put you out of doubt. All the Saints, & in word, all those who are in Paradise

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radiſe haue held the firſt, & al the dãned haue wretchedly followed the other. Demaund you of the Rich-man what way he tooke? he will anſwere you, that he hath alwayes walked vpon Flowers, & that he neuer met with Thornes, till the arriuall at his Sepulcher. Make you the ſame demaund of *Lazarus*, & you ſhall heare of him, that he hath neuer trod but vpon the Earth, all couered with bryars, nettles, and ſharpe ſtones, and that euen at the end of his trauailes he found the beginning of his glory.

Thinke not, my Dames, to be gathering of the Flowers in this world, and then to be reaping of the Fruits in the other. All things are created in a Species of Contraries, which ſerues as a Ciment to hould them togeather. The faire weather of your life ſeemes to menace Rayne at your Death, and God graunt it be not a Floud of vnprofitable teares, where without thinking thereof, you find not your Shipwracke. The calme of your daies preſages the ſtorm of your nights, and take heed you find not ſome rocke in the tyme of the tempeſt. I muſt needs confeſſe, how the Poets haue hid very excellent veritiès vnder the veyle of their Fables; that *Cerberus* with three heades, whome they figure to vs in hell, is nothing els but the deuill,

uill, who as a Monſter of many heades eternally deuours the damned. Their Ryuer of *Cocytus*, or *Phlegeton*, demonſtrates to vs the torméts of death. The lake of *Auernus* where troubles and ſadnes inhabite, what els may it ſeeme to repreſent vnto vs, then the diſmall dwelling of the wicked Spirits? The great Famine they faigne of *Tantalus*, lets vs cleerely to behould the ſcarcity and penury of all goods which the damned haue. The Vultur of *Titius* which inceſſantly preyes on the hart without deuouring it, doth figure nought els, then the worme of vnprofitable Repentance, which gnawes without end thoſe vnhappy Spirits. The wheele wherin *Ixion* is tortured, as likewiſe the Pitchers which the *Danaides* filled in vayne, are as ſo many witneſſes of the Eternity of paynes of the damned Soules; which lets vs ſee how euen thoſe who eſtabliſh their true Paradiſe in this world, haue built the without thinking of a Hell in the other, where they are euerlaſtingly puniſhed.

O cruell Eternity! What torments doſt thou truly comprehend in thy long durance there beneath in Hell, where a million of ages in puniſhments cánot forme a firſt moment of ſome end! After one hath endured and ſuffered an infinite núber of paynes, during

ring as many years as there hath been instãts in the Tyme since the birth of the world, may he not wel affirme, that he had liued in those torments, but for the space of an houre only, if he were to liue alwayes in dying, & alwaies to dye liuing, in Hell, without release or respit? My Dames, I speake to you, because you haue the Spirit wãdering in vanity. If you sigh for anguish in expectation of a Day, vpon a bed of roses, with what impatience will you be rackt in Hell, during those Eternal Nights? You shun the breath of the fire, and the burning of the Sun, as the enemyes of your beauty; why feare you not rather the tanning, and burning of the eternall flames? Let me dye rather, sayd *Nero's* wyfe, then to become foule and wrinckled. Would you be conseruing your beauty which is so deare vnto you, for a few dayes, and liue without it eternally in Hel? If you could but behould the foulnes & deformity of one damned Soule, the onely remembrance of the horrour, and amazemẽt of that obiect, would be an intollerable punishment to you.

If Nature haue not a stronger tye of loue then that wherewith it hath enchayned vs with our selfe, is it possible, my Dames, that you can exercise such a cruelty against

your

your ſelues, as not to with to liue cõtent, but in the world, where your pleaſures are like to dye with you? If Hell affright you not for its puniſhmẽts ſake, let the Eternity ther-of breed a terrour in you, to be vnhappy for euer. To be in the cõpany of deuils for euer, doth not the thought thereof only ſeeme to aſtoniſh you, ſince there is nothing more true then it? If nature, as a Step-dame, hath denyed you the fortitude of men, at leaſt it hath giuen you the force of a Spirit, for to know your errours. Loue not your beauty but to pleaſe the Angels, rather then men, ſince it is a diuine quality, whoſe admiratiõ appertaynes to them. To burne alwayes! Alas. Seeme you not to reſent, in reading the lamentable hiſtory of the puniſhments of Fire wherewith the damned are tormẽted, ſome little ſparkle of its flames, through a ſtrong apprehenſion of incurring one day thoſe paynes? I ſpeake heere to Thee, who readeſt theſe verities, to bethinke thy ſelfe of this ſingular grace, which God ſeemes to vouchſafe, in permitting this ſame Booke to fall into thy hands, ſo to diſcouer this ſẽtence, which I haue ſignifyed to thee on the behalfe of God; *That if you change not your life, you shalbe damned eternally.* O cruell Eternity!

O My Soule, thinke alwayes of this Eternity,

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nity, what torments soeuer thou suffereſt in this world, say thou alwayes with *Iob*, *My euils shall one day haue an end.* O how happy was this man to be exposed on the dunghill of al the miseries of the world, as on a moũtaine, where tuning the Harpe of his feelings, and of his passions, to the Key of his Humility, & of his Patience, he sung the glory of his Lord in the midst of his infamy. What canst thou suffer heere beneath, more cruell then the paynes of the damned? And yet if thou shouldst euen suffer a part of their punishments, without the priuation of grace, thou shouldst be happy, because those euils would termine one day, to the fruitiõ of thy soueraigne good. Then trample thou the thornes vnder thy feet, giue thy selfe in prey to dolours & sufferances, nor haue thou euer any other consolation then that of *Iob*, In saying without ceaſe, *My euills heere shall one day finish.*

The

The Houre of Death.

WE MVST DIE: This is a law of neceſſity, whereof himſelfe who made the ſame, would not be exempted. *We muſt dye*: This is a ſentence pronounced, now for theſe ſix thouſand yeares, in the Pallace of the Terreſtriall Paradiſe, by an omnipotent God, whoſe infinite Iuſtice hath not ſpared his proper Sonne. *We muſt dy*: All ſuch as hitherto haue beene, haue paſſed this way; thoſe who now are, do hold the ſame; & they who are not as yet in approching to the Cradle, do approch to the Sepulcher. *We muſt dy*: But we know not the hower, the day, the moneth, nor the yeare: we know not the place, nor the manner of the Death, whoſe paynes we are to ſuffer.

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We muſt dy. Since we hould the life but as borrowed of him that created the ſame. *We muſt dye*, it is an euil that hath no remedy; al our children muſt dy, as our Fathers did, after they had ſhewed them the way, which our Grandfathers had tracked for vs. *We muſt dy at laſt*, ſince we dy euery hower, becauſe the aire which we breath, being none of ours, we cannot ſerue our ſelues of it, but as others do in paſſing on till to morrow. *We muſt dye*, ſince that all which is in vs continually tends to death, without releaſe or intermiſſion. The very fetchings of our breath are counted, as well as our ſteps. In ſo much as all our actions are not wrought, but for a certaine terme, whence Tyme conducts vs by litle and litle to death. *We muſt dy:* This is a verity which experience proclaymes to all the world; and to the end no man may euer doubt thereof, the Sonne of God hath ſigned the Sentence with his bloud on the mount of *Caluary*.

You muſt dye great Monarkes, what markes of immortality ſoeuer you haue. Be you as eloquent as you will, *Demoſtenes* is dead; be you neuer ſo valiant, *Alexander* is layd in his Tombe: If you haue force for your inheritance, *Sampſon* is buryed vnder the ruines of the Temple which he demoliſhed.

If

If you be faire, *Abſalom* is reduced into Aſhes. If rich, *Creſus* is no more of the world; if wiſe, *Salomon* is now not lyuing; if happy, *Dauid* is expired in the midſt of his felicities. In fine, what quality ſoeuer you haue, it is alwayes inſeparable from the mortall condition wherein you are borne. *You muſt dy* and appeare in this fatall Couch, not with your gorgeous Attire, nor Royall Mantles, but rather with ſhirts, well ſteept in a cold ſweate, where your liues are to run ſhipwracke. To cary your Crownes vpon your heads, they are ſo feeble, as they cannot endure the weight. To hold your Scepters in your hands, candles rather would beſeeme you better, to affoard you light to find the Sepulcher. Your Subiects are already aſſembled about your beds, to ſee anew this verity, that you are all equall in the neceſſity of dying. Thoſe Titles of Maieſty, which they affoard you, haue no more grace with them amidſt your miſeries.

Me thinkes, in truth, it is very much to call you Men, ſince you begin to be no more ſo. It is euen iuſt now that you are to dy, the day is come, the hower approches, death is already on the way to your Pallace, you may do well if you pleaſe to put your Souldiers in Centinell, for to ſtop him in the en-

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try. Behold how he knockes at your Chamber doore, you muſt neceſſarily vouchſafe for to ſpeake vnto him, ſince he comes on the behalfe of God, to ſignify the ſentence of death vnto you. I doubt me that you haue the Spirit much occupyed, in the apprehenſion of your preſent affayres, and that you would willingly put of the accompt to ſome other day, but that may not be; Tyme hath ſtrooke the houre, which is to beare ſway at the end of your daies. What ſighes, what ſobs, what plaints caſt you forth to the wind? the remẽbrance of your Greatneſſes paſt torments you now, while your guilty conſciences put your ſoules on the Racke, like as the dolours already haue put your bodies. For to caſt your eyes vpõ the guilded Seelings, were to increaſe the horrour of the Sepulcher which they prepare you. To behould likewiſe your Courtiers who ſtand about you, the diſpleaſure you find to leaue them, makes you to turne your view another way. Whereas it were better to ſet your eyes on the approches of Death, and in the feeling of your preſent Miſeryes, to publiſh in dying this verity, that you are but aſhes, durt, & corruption.

Diogenes was walking one day in a certaine Churchyard, where he entertayned his

his ſad thoughts in the meditatiõ of death, at what tyme *Alexander* ſurprized him by a ſuddaine approch, & demaunds of him what he was doing in ſo diſmal & ſolitary a place? I am buſied, ſaid the Philoſopher, in ſeeking out the bones of *Philip* your Father, amidſt ſo great a number of theſe you ſee heere, but the payne which I take is vnprofitable, becauſe they are all equall. This Anſwere is full of Myſteries, for it ſeemes to repreſent vs to the life, this Verity, That the greateſt Kings of the world differ not a whit, but in goods and greatneſſes only, from the wretchedſt that are, ſince in the Tombe they reſemble ech other ſo much, as it were impoſſible to marke any difference betweene them.

But me thinkes, the houre is already ſpent, and that Death knockes harder now at the Chamber doore then before. Behold how he enters in, carrying his Sithe in the one hand, & an Hower-glaſſe in the other, to let vs ſee that if he mow the hay of your life with his Sithe, the ſand of the Hower-glaſſe which he carries, being taken for the Foundation of your vaine-glory, is euen now run out, ſo as if there remaine any little behind, it is but only to giue you leaſure, to open your mouth, for to caſt forth the laſt

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breath in this laſt moment. *O fearefull momẽt*, wheron depends the Eternity of Glory, or the Eternity of paine! This is that laſt breth which condemnes, or iuſtifies all thoſe who haue gone before. *O ſearfull moment*, wherin is pronounced the Sentence of our ſecond life or Death! *O fearefull moment*, ſince it preſides the birth of our wretchednes, or of our felicity! *O fearefull moment*, wherein all our good, or euill conſiſts! *O fearful moment*, wherein Paradiſe is offered, or Hell afforded! *O fearefull moment*, wherin we are made companions for euer of the Angels, or of the deuils! *O fearfull moment*, where the Soule before God, findes the Eternall recompẽce of its good deeds, or euerlaſting paynes of its crimes!

O fearefull moment! what ioyes, what ſorrowes, what pleaſures, and what dolours doeſt thou comprize in thy ſhort durance! As often as I thinke on thee, I do tremble with feare, for this moment is a great deale more dreadfull, then death it ſelfe. This only moment is it, my Soule, whereupon the Eternity depends. Imploy thou all thoſe of thy life vpon the thoughts of this laſt. Thou approcheſt vnto it euery hower, euery inſtant robs thee of ſomewhat of thy former life. Whatſoeuer thou doeſt, thy body doth nothing

nothing but dye, & from its transitory life, depẽds thy eternall life, for out of the Earth canſt thou merit nothing for Heauen. Thinke thou alwayes on this laſt moment, where Crownes and Puniſhments are prepared; Crownes of an infinite glory; Puniſhments of a dolour immortall. All thy actions ſhall there be receiuing their price or paine: Price of Paradiſe, or payne of Hell. Hence it is that the Prophet cries; *I ſhall remember the day of my death for to liue eternally.*

Caſt your eyes now vpon thoſe Kings, extended dead vpon their rich Couches. What ſay I, thoſe Kings? can Maieſty & corruption be compatible togethet? What apparence of beliefe, in beholding them to be ſuch, that they are Kings, ſince all their Royall qualities are dead with them? Would not a man ſay, they were heapes of Earth, ſo rayſed aboue the Earth, where the worms are beginning to take their fees? Approach to this fatall couch, you proud Spirits, who meaſure the globe of the Earth through this vayne beliefe, that you merit the Empire of it, and in your imagination contemplate the while thoſe that poſſeſſe them in effect, and you ſhall behold them quite through teares laied ſtretched at your feet, without pulſe, & without motion. Their Maieſties are full of

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horrour, and miſeryes in their turne haue taken hold of their owne, ſince they are all borne mortall, and conſequently miſerable; what ſtrange Metamorphoſis from Coloſſus's of Greatneſſes, quickened with a lyfe full of ſplendour and of glory, to be chaunged in an inſtant into an heape of durt, whoſe putrifaction infectes the whole world?

You Monarkes, Kings, Princes, be you Idolatours of your Greatneſſes as much as you pleaſe, I attend you at the end of your Carriere, to let you ſee on the backſide of the Medall, that you are but corruption; & if you doubt thereof, let him that ſuruiues another, approch to his Tombe, & he ſhall ſenſibly know, that there is nothing more true in the world. Thou miſer, approch to this mournfull Couch, there is place inough for thee. Thou needs muſt dye, the houre is ſtrooke; but tell me, how much gold and ſiluer doſt thou leaue in thy coffers, and to what end ſerue they but to purchaſe thee Hell? Thou muſt yield an accompt of thy extortions and oppreſſions. Death comes to ſummon thee on the behalfe of God, to appeare within an houre before the Tribunal of his Iuſtice, to heare thy ſentence of death pronounced by his owne mouth. What

wouldſt

wouldeſt thou not giue to prolong, yea but a day onely, the terme of thy departure? But all thy treaſures cannot buy thee a moment of lyfe, thou muſt dye.

O cruell neceſſity, and yet more cruell the dolour, which now ſeemes to martyr thy ſoule! Thou muſt dye; Thou maieſt weep long inough, for death is blind; thou maieſt cry as faſt as thou wilt, while he is deafe; for to hope that the Greatnes of thy miſeryes may mooue him to Pitty, he neither hath hart, nor bowels; & if he liue notwithſtanding, it is for nothing but to enforce al the world to dy. Thy houre is come thou muſt dye; Alas! How many deaths doſt thou ſuffer, ere thou looſeſt thy lyfe. Thou leaueſt thy children rich, it is true; but dyeſt miſerable thy ſelfe, in the ſtate of damnation. Behold thee well recompenced for the paynes thou haſt taken, in heaping ſo much wealth, forſooth, to looſe thy ſoule! Cruell to thy ſelfe! Thou haſt not lyued, but for others. Infidell! thou haſt betrayed thy ſelfe. Murderer! thou haſt ſnatched away thy lyfe, with an vnnaturall hand, imploying thy care to fil thy coffers with gold and thy ſoule with crymes.

You Miſers, if you read the hiſtory of theſe Verities, deriue your profit frõ the domage

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of others, & for the auoyding of theſe pier-cing griefes, and the intollerable dolours of this laſt momẽt of life, imploy all the others to thoughtes of the Eternity of glory, or of Payne. And imitating the Prophet, ſay with him: *Lord I wil remẽber me of the day of death, for to liue eternally*. You muſt appeare, my Dames, ech one in her turn in this lamẽtable couch. The watch which Death ſeems to cary in his hand, hath ſtrooke the hower already of the departure of the faireſt. She muſt needs dye, but aſſiſt, I pray, at this ſad ſpectacle. Me thinkes I ſee her now farre different from that which ſhe was wont to be. Alas! What a chaunge! I ſeeke for the Maieſties which I haue ſometymes ſeene in her brow, and I find nothing els but horrour, and amaze-ment there. I demaund of her eyes, what is euen become of them, for they are buryed ſo deepe in her head, as they but looſe ſight of them who ſeeke for them. Her cheekes as ſticht one to the other, do hinder her from opening the mouth, in ſuch ſort as her tõgue can ſpeake no more then a ſad language of ſighes, to call vpon Pitty, to contemplate her miſeryes withall. Her armes very care-leſly ſtretched forth, euen dy with their fee-blenes; In fine her body of Earth deuoures by little and little the fleſh that couers it.

Who

Who would ſay now, ſeeing this Dame in the ſtate whereunto ſhe is brought, that ſhe was the other day the fayreſt of the Citty? Her company was a duncing with her at ſuch a tyme, where all the Gallants that were there, fell a ſtriuing to court her moſt. One valued the Gold of her hayre; another the Iuory of her teeth. This heere, admired the ſnow of her boſome; and he there, the alabaſter of her hands. The caſts of her eyes did wound many of them, and the allurements of her graces, increaſed yet the number. The more indifferẽt to loue, would become great Maiſters thereof, with the ſight of her perfections: and yet neuertheles is it true (a ſtrange thing) that her hayre heertofore of gold, and now ſtaring as it were, hath loſt its luſtre; that her teeth of Iuory are become blacke with the blaſt of death; that the ſnow of her boſome is diſſolued; that the alabaſter of her hands is faded; that the ſpecies of her eyes are dulled, ſo as if they wound as yet, they are but the woũds of Pitty. That her graces are without grace, and that in fine all thoſe, who admired the ſame heertofore, come to repent themſelues, and ſuch as had loued her when tyme was, are now diſpleaſed with themſelues, for hauing euer ſo much as dreamed of her.

What

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What cruell Metamorphoſis, my Dames! If you cannot giue credit to the faithfull report, which I make you of theſe verityes, caſt but your eyes vpon this doleful Couch, and you ſhall ſee a liuing image of your ſelf, or rather a dying of one, now brought to the laſt extremes. You make ſuch accompt of your charmes, behold them in the Tõbe; you prize your bayts ſo much, contemplate the ſame in ruine; you cheriſh your Sweetneſſes ſo dearly, conſider their feeblenes; you make a ſhew of your deliciouſnes and your allureméts, behold to what paſſe they are now brought. Vaunt you of the Roſes of your face, as much as you pleaſe, they are no more but Thornes. If you lay forth to view the whitenes of your delicate complexion, ſee you not how pale now dolour hath made it for to take away its beauty? All thoſe lockes ſo curled in nets of loue; all thoſe eye-browes ſo carefully elaborate with a trembling hand; that face ſo waſhed and plaiſtered ouer with a ſecret art; thoſe paynted lips; that necke ſo erected through force of endeauour; thoſe curious actions, thoſe ſmiles, thoſe Vn-voluntaries of hers, and all thoſe agreable faſhions are vaniſhed now in an inſtant, and horrour and dreadfulneſſe poſſeſſe their place.

Alas!

Alas! how the pourtraite of this Dame, which I see there hanging at her beds head, is differẽt far from its originall? The shadow of that body moues to loue, the body of this shadow to pitty. The allurements of this liueles image are all full of charmes, and the draughts of this beauty yet liuing, wounds with feare, insteed of loue. The hower in the meane tyme seemes to passe away, and she must dy. Alas! what dolours do they feele in this cruell departure? From what payne are they exempt? This poore Dame beholds her selfe abandoned of all the world and which is worse of the Phisitians themselues. She sees not but by the light of mortuary torches, which are lighted round about her bed. A confused noyse of sighes & plaints doth smite her eares; Her owne sauour begins to infect her, and her feeling is exercised with the sufferance of a thousand sorts of paynes, and all very different in thẽselues. Whatsoeuer she beholds afflicts her, because all the obiects which are represented to her, do carry the image of her dolefulnes with them. Her Parents & her Friends are about her indeed, but they are as so many executioners that put her hart vpõ the racke by reason of the griefe she feeles to forgoe them for euer.

Her

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Her only Brother comes to her, to giue her a kiſſe, all bedẽwed with teares, and his moaning plaints do euen plucke out the hart from her boſome, as knowing them to be the very laſt. Her Father oppreſſed with ſorrow comes to bid her the laſt Adieu, but all of ſighes, in regard her euill now growne to extremes, ſeemes to put him to ſilence; in ſo much as his teares and ſighes are feigne to ſpeake for him to his dying daughter; who makes him anſwere in the ſame language, both of the eyes & hart, without being able to let fall a word. Her mother hath her eyes glued vpon her pale and diffigured countenance; and in this dumbe action of hers, whereto an exceſſe of dolour hath brought her, ſhe ſuffers a great deale more payne to ſee her dye, then ſhe had pangs before to bring her forth. And ſo in order al thoſe that loued her, and whome ſhe dearely loued, came in, to yield her this laſt duty of viſit. But howbeit they premeditated ſomewhat to ſay vnto her, their tongues became mute at their approch, and their eyes made ſupply of diſcourſe in their faſhion. For what meanes is there to ſpeake in a dolefull place, where Death goes impoſing an eternall ſilence? The Prieſt approacheth to the bed, with a Crucifix in his hand, which he preſents

ſents to this foule ſicke wretch: ſhe takes it with a trembling hãd, knowing it to be the Croſſe, whereupon the Omnipotent Iudge was nayled. If ſhe caſt her eyes vpon his Crowne of Thornes, ſhe drawes them into her hart, by her lookes, in remembring the roſes, which ſhe had deliciouſly troad vnder her feet during her lyfe: But there is now no more tyme to be carying the ſame into the ſoule, becauſe her ſenſes, as halfe dead, are vnſenſible of their prickings.

If ſhe reguard the viſage of this her Sauiour all couered with comtempt, ſhe ſinckes downe with the confuſion of the outrages, that ſhe hath done to herſelf, remembring the guilty care which ſhe hath taken, in playſtering her face of earth, and ruyning in that manner with a ſacrilegious hand the ſacred workmanſhip of heauen, and of Nature; and for hauing imployed the better part of her tyme in theſe errours, to the diſparagement of her ſoule, as if the ſame were corruptible like the body. The torments which her God, and her Iudge hath ſuffered for her vpon this Croſſe which ſhe holds in her hand, and which ſhe neuer had borne in her hart, do ſhamefully vpbrayd her now, for the delights of her lyfe. Then falls ſhe a ſighing at it, but her ſighs of wind

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aretaken but for wind; ſhe weepes thereat, but her teares of water, are taken but for a litle water, ſince ſhe cannot wipe away the blot of her crymes, becauſe their ſpring deriues not from the hart; and that her teares proceed from the feare of preſent death, rather then from a ſorrow of lyfe paſt.

There need no other witneſſes to condemne her withall, then the wounds of her Sauiour; for as he had ſuffered all the paines of the world, ſo ſhe had taſted all the pleaſures. Alas! if ſhe could but turne backe againe, and returne to the midſt of the courſe of her life; if her words might haue the ſame vertue, which thoſe of *Ioſue* had, for to cōmaund the Sunne to returne backe agayne to its Eaſt, to affoard her leaſure to do penaunce in; is it not credible, my Dames, but that ſhe would be dipping the bread of her nouriſhment, within the water of her teares, for to bewayle her ſins? But that is in vayne to deſire the returne of life, ſince ſhe muſt dy and the houre is already ſtrook. Alas! how many liuing deathes deuoure this poore body, before her life be ſnatched away at laſt? What ſtrange torment ſeemes to racke her ſoule? ſhe dyes with ſorrow, for not being able to liue any longer, and notwithſtanding euery moment of life is to her an

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age of dolour. She is ſo engulfed in torméts, as ſhe imagines, that all the afflictions in the Earth, are aſſembled in her Chamber, or rather in her Soule, ſince now ſhe is brought into extremes, through the force of anguiſh. Sorrow for the paſt, apprehenſion of the future, horrour of the Sepulcher, and the vncertainty ſhe is in of her ſaluatiō, do hould her ſpirit continually on the racke.

That little which ſhe ſees, is but to bid Adieu to the light; that little which ſhe vnderſtands, is for her laſt: and being thus brought into this extremity, now it is when the diuel lets her ſee to the life, the pourtrait of all the offences which ſhe hath euer committed, to the end the enormity of them being ioyned with their number, might make her to turne her face to deſpaire. To make yet an exact Confeſſion, all her Spirits are in diſorder, and the powers of her Soule ſo feeble, as they can ſerue but for reſentment of her euills. She would fayne ſpeake, but a mortall ſtuttering with-holdes her tongue halfe tyed; and on the other ſide the ſmatt of the payne which ſhe ſuffers, is ſo ſharpe, as ſhe cannot open the mouth but to cry. A dolour without ceaſe torments her continually: her dying life is wandring euery moment, in the puniſhments ſhe is in, & when

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ſhe finds her ſelfe, it is but to looſe her ſelfe agayne in her ſyncopes, which are the fore-runners of her Death. The eyes bolt out of her head, as if they had this knowledge, that they were vnprofitable vnto her; her mouth awry, and halfe open, giues paſſage, by the eye, vnto her bowells, to behold the torments ſhe is in. It is now tyme, my Dames, you preſent her with a Mirrour, for to employ her laſt reguards, on the ſad contemplation of the dreadfull ruines of her beauty; what faces makes ſhe the while? her hideous looke affrights not only little children, but euen likewiſe the moſt couragious.

Behold your ſelues, my Dames, within this glaſſe, if you will but apparantly ſee the faults which are hidde vnder your own, from point to point, or rather vnder the Spaniſh white, wherewith you are paynted. Behold into what eſtate are reduced your allurements, your charmes, your ſweetneſſes, and your bayts, which you ſo put in the rancke of adorable things. Theſe are no Fables, no Illuſions, nor Enchantements, theſe; you haue ſeen the other day this foule dying wretch, with a luſtre of beauty, that dazeled all the world, who to day ſeemes to mooue you to pitty, and horrour at once. Marke well all her actions, but quickned

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with dolour and dread: theſe are the true examples of thoſe, which you ſhall one day ſuffer, it may be to morrow, or euen to day who knowes? And then, dare you waxe ſo proud of your beauty as you do, while the cruſt thereof is now thus broken as you ſee, in the preſence of ſo many perſons, who haue ſeene, how the inſide was all, but full of corruption?

In this meane while, the ſicke perſon dyes by litle and litle. It is now tyme, to make the funerall of thoſe fayre eyes, ſince their light is thus extinct. The Prieſt may cry in her eares long inough, for death hath taken vp his lodging there, and euery one knowes that ſhe is deafe. Her hands, & her feet are without motion, as well as without heat; the hart ſeemes to beate as yet, but it is onely to bid Adieu to the Soule, which is now a departing; and to tell you whither, I leaue you to thinke. Such a life, ſuch a death. Let me only ſay, *That the Iudgements of God are far different from thoſe of men*. Approach then, to this corpes, you profane Spirits, & through a ſenſible ſorrow of hauing euer heertofore adored its Beauties, participate with its death. Behold its hayre, which once you termed golden, and wherwith *Loue* vſed to ſerue himſelfe, to tye the Freeſt; the

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luſtre now is vaniſhed from it, the beauty is defaced, nor can it ſerue for ought, but to mooue pitty. That brow heertofore ſo full of Maieſty in your eyes, and where the Graces appeared in troupes (theſe are your termes) is now become an obiect of hate, & contempt. Thoſe eyes which you called, your *Sunns*, reſemble now two Torches newly put out, whoſe ſtinke driues away as many as approch vnto them. The Roſes of thoſe cheekes are changed into Thornes; the coral lips are now of alabaſter; the iuory neck is now of earth; the boſom now is no more of ſnow, but all of aſhes; & finally this whole beautifull body, is fleſh no more, but euen durt. And if you will not belieue me, approach neerer, & you ſhall reſent the infection thereof.

Behould, O you Courtiers the Idoll of your Paſſions. What a ſhame is it now for you, to haue adored this carkaſſe, ſo full of wormes and putrifaction? You made of its preſence, during its lyfe, an imaginary Paradiſe, and now you would make it a true Hell. Heertofore you could not liue without ſeeing her dayly, and at this time, you euen dye, with the onely beholding her. It is not yet three dayes, ſince you kiſſed the picture with an action of Idolatry, & now

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at this preſent, you dare not to caſt your eyes vpon the originall, ſo dreadfull and formidable it is. Repreſet vnto you then, for your ſatisfaction, that all the fayreſt Dames of the world ſhalbe reduced one day to this piteous eſtate; and that all their graces, which are borrowed of Art, accompany them no more, then as a day of the Spring; in ſo much as if they waxe old, they paſſe the moſt part of their age out of themſelues. For without diſſebling with the tymes, a Dame when ſhe is growne in yeares, is fayre no more, ſhe liues no longer in the world, they put her in the ranke of things which are paſt, & whoſe memory is loſt.

Looke when a beautifull face comes to your view, and make you at that inſtant an Anatomy of it: if you caſt your eyes vpõ her faire eyes, repreſent to your ſelfe in that moment, how they are ſubiect to 63. diſeaſes, all different one from another, and that one drop of defluxion produceth a contagion in thoſe who behold thẽ. Her noſe which you iudg ſo curious, is as a Siluer box ful of ointments, for one cannot defend himſelfe frõ the infectiõ which iſſueth thence, but with Muske and Ciuet. Her mouth is ordinarily infected, with the corruption of her teeth. If the Hands of this faire body ſeeme to ple-

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aſe you, know you not how ſhe ſteepes thē euery day in lye, for to make them white; I would ſay, that ſhe is fayne to waſh them euery moment to take away the ſpots & foulnes of them. In fine, whatſoeuer you ſee of this beautifull body, is but playſter, & what appeares not otherwiſe, but mere corruptiō.

Dreſſe then, and tricke vp your ſelues, you Dames, as long as you pleaſe; yet ſhall you not change, for all that, the nature you are of. If you charme the world through your falſe allurements, the world charmes you with its vayne promiſes. Do not flatter your ſelues, you are but clay, infection, and corruption. So as, if neuertheles you enforce any loue, it is but through impoſture; for that, couering your face with a new vilage, it is eaſy to deceiue thoſe who haue no iudgement but in the eyes. If then you would leaue of Vanity, muſe alwaies vpon Death, ſince you may happen dy at any houre, be it in banquetting, be it in walking. Go whither you wil, your paces conduct you to the Tombe. And at ſuch tyme, as you ſtand before your Glaſſe, in the action of waſhing your face, imagine how it ſhall putrify one day, and perhaps to morrow, and that al the care you take, to make it white, will not hinder the wormes frō deuouring the ſame.

Yet

Yet after you haue imployed about it, a whole phiall of ſweet water, ſhed at leaſt one ſalt teare of ſorrow for your ſins, to waſh your moſt enormous Soule.

What a ſhame is it then, for you to trick & trimme vp your body ſo euery day, wherof the wormes haue already taken poſſeſſion, and to abandon your ſoule on the dunghill of your Miſeryes, whereunto your crymes haue brought you? Hearken to the Hower that euen now ſtrickes: what know you, whether if ſhalbe your laſt? do you find your ſelfe, trow you, in a good eſtate, to preſent your ſelfe before a dreadful Iudge, who hath ſo many Hells to puniſh the guilty? Your companion is dead already, and you take no heed, but euen run after her, euery moment without ceaſe, or without any reſpit. How then is it poſſible, that you can runne ſo to Death, in the eſtate of damnation, wherein you are? Rather imitate the *Parthians* who in flying, triumphed of their enemyes. And weepe for ſorrow of your life, in running to Death; and ſigh in way of repentance to the laſt gaſpe. Imitate alſo that great Perſonage who cauſed himſelfe to be paynted on a Beere, with his face bare, his hands ioyned together, euen in the very ſame poſture wherein he was to be layd forth after his Death,

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Death, and euery morning would he go to make his prayer before this picture; which succeeded so happily with him, as he dyed without any trouble, or disquietnes.

Syrs, I haue represented to you in the beginning of my Booke, how there is nothing assured in this world; the which, me thinkes should oblige you first to lift vp your eyes to Heauen, for to see the Eternity of the glory which is there promised vnto you; and then as all dazeled, to cast them downe agayne, with the helpe of your imagination, into Hel, whose punishments also in part I haue described to you. Then returning to your self, consider how these felicities, and Eternall paines depend on a moment; and this is the moment of Death, whereunto you approach euery houre. Repose your selfe then, euery day, for a quarter of an houre, vpon this dolefull Couch, where this late beautiful Dame hath expired; & diuert your Spirit in this tyme of grace, to thinke vpon that, which you would then be thinking of, when you shall come to be tyed thereunto with the chaynes of dolour & anguish. And these be the true Thoughtes of Eternity.

FINIS.

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